

THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE PASTORAL CARE
OF MIGRANTS AND ITINERANT PEOPLE

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THE SHRINE
MEMORIAL, PRESENCE AND
PROPHECY OF THE LIVING GOD

—AND—

THE PILGRIMAGE
IN THE GREAT JUBILEE
OF THE YEAR 2000

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FOREWORD

The approach of the Great Jubilee Year 2000 brought to the fore the important role of pilgrimage and shrines in the life of the Church, demonstrated by the ever increasing number of visitors to holy places. To respond to such an interesting phenomenon in our time, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People published pastoral documents on *The Shrine* and *The Pilgrimage*.

The first document, *The Shrine: Memory, Presence and Prophecy of the Living God*, offers a synthesis of the most important biblical, theological, historical and pastoral elements which express the dynamic reality of shrines in the life of the Church today. It also recognizes that the environment of a shrine is the core of conversion, reflection, and prayer which facilitates the spiritual development of the faithful.

The Shrine is a continuation of a study undertaken earlier by the Pontifical Council which led to the creation of the second document in this volume, *The Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000*. In fact, the motivating factors that led to the elaboration of these two studies were the Council's pastoral concern for travel undertaken for devotional motives, i.e., pilgrimages, and the pastoral care of shrines.

These two publications reflect the pastoral reality of shrines and provide a valuable resource for the future development of Shrine and Pilgrimage Apostolate.

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Vatican City

THE SHRINE

MEMORIAL, PRESENCE AND PROPHECY OF THE LIVING GOD

INTRODUCTION

Meaning and aim of the document

1. All Christians are invited to join and take part in the great pilgrimage that Christ, the Church and humankind have accomplished and must continue accomplishing in history. The shrine towards which they must be directed is to become 'the Tent of Meeting,' as the Bible calls the tabernacle of the alliance."¹ These words directly connect the reflection on pilgrimages² to that on shrines, which is normally the visible goal of the pilgrim's itinerary: "The term shrine signifies a church or other sacred place to which the faithful make pilgrimages for a particular pious reason with the approval of the local ordinary."³ In the shrine, the meeting with the living God is offered through the vivifying experience of the *Mystery* proclaimed, celebrated and lived: "At shrines, more abundant means of salvation are to be provided the faithful; the word of God is to be carefully proclaimed; liturgical life is to be appropriately fostered especially through the celebration of the Eucharist and penance; and approved forms of popular piety are to be cultivated."⁴ Thus, "shrines are like milestones that guide the journey of the children of God on earth"⁵ they foster the experience of convocation, meeting and construction of the ecclesial community.

These characteristics apply in a very singular way to the shrines that have come up in the Holy Land, in the places sanctified by the presence of the Word Incarnate, and they can readily be recognized particularly in those places consecrated by the martyrdom of the Apostles and those who gave witness to their faith with their own blood. However, one can find the whole history of the pilgrim Church reflected in numberless shrines, "permanent antennae of the Good News,"⁶ linked to decisive events of evangelization or of the life of faith of peoples and of communities. Every shrine can be considered a bearer of a specific message, inasmuch as today it represents the founding event of the past, which continues to speak to the heart of the pilgrims. In particular, Marian shrines offer an authentic school of faith based on Mary's example and motherly intercession. Witnesses to the multiple rich-

ness of the salvific action of God, all shrines are also, at the present time, an inestimable gift of grace to His Church.

Therefore, reflecting on the nature and the function of shrines can effectively contribute to welcoming and living the great gift of reconciliation and new life that the Church continually offers to all the disciples of the Redeemer and, through them, to the whole human family. From this can be deduced the *meaning and the aim* of the present document, that wishes to echo the spiritual life that buds in shrines, the pastoral commitment of those who discharge their ministry there and their effect of diffusion on the local Churches.

The reflection that follows is only a modest aid in appreciating more and more the service that shrines render to the life of the Church.

Listening to revelation

2. So that the reflection on shrines would be nourishing to the faith and fruitful for pastoral action, it is necessary for it to draw from the spring of an *obedient listening to revelation*, in which the message and the force of salvation contained in the “mystery of the Temple” are densely presented.

In biblical, especially Pauline, language, the term “mystery” expresses the divine design of salvation that is realized in the events of human life. When the “mystery of the Temple” is examined in the school of the Word of God, beyond the visible signs of history, one can catch a glimpse of the presence of divine “glory” (cf. *Ps* 29:9), i.e., the manifestation of God who is thrice Holy (cf. *Is* 6:3), his presence in conversations with mankind (cf. *1 Kings* 8:30-53), his entry in time and space, planting his “tent” in our midst (cf. *Jn* 1:14). The lines of a theory of the temple is thus delineated, in the light of which the significance of the shrine can be understood better.

This theology is characterized by a progression in focal points: In the first place, the figure of the “cosmic temple” emerges. This is commemorated, for example, by Psalm 19 through the image of the “two suns,” the sun of the Torah, or of the revelation explicitly addressed to Israel (vv. 7-14), and the sun in the heavens that “declare the glory of God” (vv. 1-6) through a revelation that is silent and universal, but effective and directed to everyone. Within this temple, the divine presence exists everywhere, as Psalm 139 recites, and a liturgy of praise is celebrated, attested to by Psalm 148, which, aside from the heavenly creatures, introduces 22 earthly creatures (as many as the letters of the Hebraic alphabet, meaning the whole of creation) intoning a universal alleluia.

Thus, there is the temple of Jerusalem, custodian of the Ark of the Covenant, holy place *par excellence* of the Hebraic faith and permanent memorial of the God of history, who established a pact with His people and remained faithful to it. The temple is the visible house of the Eternal (*Ps* 11:4), filled by the cloud of His presence (cf. *1 Kings* 8:10-13), full of His “glory” (cf. *1 Kings* 8:11).

Finally, there is the new and definitive temple, constituted by the eternal Son who became flesh (cf. *Jn* 1:14), the Lord Jesus crucified and risen (cf. *Jn* 2:19-21), who makes those who believe in Him temples of living stones, which is the pilgrim Church in time: "He is the living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him so that you, too, may be living stones making a spiritual house as a holy priesthood to offer the spiritual sacrifices made acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 *Pt* 2:4-5). By setting ourselves close to Him who is the "living stone," we build the spiritual building of the new and perfect alliance. We also prepare for the feast of the Kingdom that is "not yet" fully realized through spiritual sacrifices (cf. *Rm* 12:1-2), pleasing to God precisely because they are fulfilled in Christ, through Him and with Him, the Alliance in person. In this way, the Church is presented above all as "the holy temple, visibly represented in the shrines of stone."⁷

The supporting arcades

3. In the light of these witnesses, it is possible to go more profoundly into the "mystery of the Temple" in three directions, corresponding to the three dimensions of time and constituting the *supporting arcades* of a theology of the shrine, which is *memorial, presence and prophecy* of God-with-us.

In relation to the unique and definitive past of the salvific event, the shrine is given as a *memorial* of our origin in the Lord of heaven and earth. In relation to the *present* of the community of the redeemed, gathered together in the time between the first and the last Advent of the Lord, it appears as a sign of the divine *Presence*, place of the Alliance, where the community of the pact expresses and regenerates itself again and again. In relation to the *future* fulfillment of the promise of God, to that "not yet" which is the object of a greater hope, the shrine is set as a *prophecy* of God's tomorrow in the world's today.

In relation to each of these three dimensions, it will be possible also to develop the inspiring lines of a pastoral care of shrines, capable of translating in personal and ecclesial life the symbolic message of the temple, in which the Christian community gathers together, convoked by the bishop and the priests who are his collaborators.

I

THE SHRINE, MEMORIAL OF THE ORIGIN

Memorial of the work of God

4. The shrine is first of all a *place of the memorial* of the powerful action of God in history, which is at the origin of the people of the alliance and of the faith of each one of the faithful.

Already during their times, the Patriarchs recall an encounter with God by building an altar or a memorial (cf. *Gn* 12:6-8; 13:18; 33:18-20), to which they go back as a sign of fidelity (cf. *Gn* 13:4; 46:1), and Jacob considers the place where his vision took place as a "house of God" (cf. *Gn* 28:11-22). Thus, in biblical tradition, the shrine is not simply the fruit of human work, filled with cosmological or anthropological symbolism, but gives witness to God's initiative in communicating Himself to human persons to stipulate with them the pact of salvation. The significant meaning of every shrine is to be a reminder in the faith of the salvific work of the Lord.⁸

In the atmosphere of adoration, invocation and praise, Israel knows that it was his God who freely wanted the Temple, and not human demand. An exemplary witness to this is the splendid prayer of Solomon, which comes exactly from the dramatic awareness of the possibility of giving in to idolatrous temptation: "Yet will God really live with human beings on earth? Why, the heavens, the highest of the heavens cannot contain you. How much less this temple built by me! Even so, listen favorably to the prayer and entreaty of your servant, Yahweh my God; listen to the cry and to the prayer which your servant makes to you today: day and night may your eyes watch over this temple, over this place of which you have said, 'My name will be there.' Listen to the prayer which your servant offers in this place" (1 *Kings* 8:27-29).

Thus, the shrine was not built because Israel wanted to capture the presence of the Eternal, but just on the contrary, because the living God, who entered history, who walked with his people in the cloud by day and in the fire by night (cf. *Ex* 13:21), wanted to give a sign of His fidelity and His ever actual presence in the midst of His people. So then, the Temple will not be the house built by human hands, but the place that witnesses the initiative of Him who alone builds the house. It is the simple and great truth entrusted to the words of the prophet Nathan: "Go and tell my servant David, 'Yahweh says this: Are you to build me a temple for me to live in? ...Yahweh furthermore tells you that he will make you a dynasty. And when your days are over and you fall asleep with your ancestors, I shall appoint your heir, your own son to succeed you and I shall make his sovereignty secure. He will build a temple for my name and I shall make his royal throne secure forever. I shall be a father to him and he a son to me'" (2 *Sam* 7:5, 11-14).

The shrine thus takes on the characteristic of being a living *memorial* of the origin from above of the chosen and beloved people of the alliance. It is the permanent reminder of the fact that one is not born as God's people by flesh or blood (cf. *Jn* 1:13), but that the life of faith is born by the admirable initiative of God, who entered history to unite us to Himself and change our heart and life. The shrine is the efficacious *memorial* of the work of God, the visible sign that proclaims to all generations how great He is in love, and testifies that He first loved us (cf. *1 Jn* 4:19) and wanted to be the Lord and Savior of His people. As Gregory of Nyssa stated in reference to Holy Places, in every shrine one can recognize "the traces of the great goodness of the Lord for us," "the salvific signs of God who vivified us,"⁹ "the memories of the mercy of the Lord for us."¹⁰

The initiative "from above"

5. In the New Testament, what in the Old Testament was the Temple of Jerusalem finds its highest fulfillment in the mission of the Son of God, who himself becomes the new Temple, the dwelling of the Eternal among us, the Alliance in person. The episode of the expulsion of the dealers from the temple (cf. *Mt* 21:12-13) declares that the holy space, on one hand, has been extended to all peoples, as is confirmed by a detail of great symbolical value, that of the veil of the temple "torn in two from top to bottom" (*Mk* 15:38); on the other hand, it gets concentrated in the person of Him who—victorious over death (cf. *2 Tm* 1:10)—can be the sacrament of the encounter with God for everyone.

To the religious leaders, Jesus said: "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Citing their reply—"It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple: are you going to raise it up again in three days?"—John the Evangelist commented: "But he was speaking of the Temple that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and what he had said" (*Jn* 2:19-22).

Also in the economy of the new Alliance, the Temple is the sign of the initiative of God's love in history: Christ, the one sent by the Father, God made man for us, high priest for ever (cf. *Heb* 7), is the new Temple, the awaited and promised Temple, the sanctuary of the new and eternal Alliance (cf. *Heb* 8). Both in the Old and in the New Testament, therefore, the shrine is the living *memorial* of the origin, that is, of the initiative by which God loved us first (*1 Jn* 4:19). Each time Israel looked at the Temple with the eyes of faith, each time Christians look, with eyes like these, at Christ, the new Temple, and at the shrines that, from the edict of Constantine, they themselves built as a sign of the living Christ among us, in this sign they recognize the initiative of love of the living God for humankind.¹¹

The shrine thus testifies that God is greater than our heart, that He has always loved us and has given us His Son and the Holy Spirit because He wants to dwell in us and make us His temple, and of our members the shrine

of the Holy Spirit. As St. Paul says: "Do you not realize that you are a temple of God with the Spirit of God living in you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy that person, because God's temple is holy; and you are that temple" (1 Cor 3:16-17; cf. 6:19); "the temple of God ... is what we are—the temple of the living God. We have God's word for it: *I shall fix my home among them and live among them; I will be their God and they will be my people*" (2 Cor 6:16).

The shrine is the place of the permanent actualization of the love of God who has planted His tent among us (cf. Jn 1:14), therefore, as St. Augustine affirmed, in the holy place "there is no succession of days as if each day were to come and then go. The beginning of one does not mark the end of the other, because everything there will be present contemporaneously. The life to which those days belong will not set."¹² Thus, in ever new ways, in the shrine resounds the joyful proclamation that "God loved us first and gave us the capacity to love him ... He did not love us to leave us as ugly as we were, but to transform us and make us beautiful ... How shall we be beautiful? By loving Him, who is always beautiful. In the measure that love grows in you, so much will beauty grow; charity is precisely the beauty of the soul."¹³ The shrine thus reminds us constantly that new life is not born "from below" by a purely human initiative, that the Church is not simply a fruit of flesh and blood (cf. Jn 1:13), but that the redeemed existence and the ecclesial communion by which it expresses itself are born "from above" (cf. Jn 3:3), from the gratuitous and surprising initiative of trinitarian love that precedes man's love (cf. 1 Jn 4:9-10).

Awe and adoration

6. What are the consequences for our Christian life of this first and fundamental message that the shrine transmits, it being a memorial of our origin in the Lord?

Three fundamental perspectives can be identified.

In the first place, the shrine reminds us that the Church is born out of the initiative of God; an initiative that the piety of the faithful and public approval of the Church recognize in the founding event that lies at the origin of every shrine. Thus, in everything that has anything to do with the shrine and in everything that is expressed in it, it is necessary to discern the presence of the mystery, a work of God in time, a manifestation of His efficacious presence, hidden under the signs of history. Furthermore, this conviction is conveyed in the shrine through the specific message connected with it, both in reference to the mystery of the life of Jesus Christ, and in relation to some of the titles of Mary, "who shines forth to the whole community of the elect as a model of the virtues,"¹⁴ and in relation to the individual Saints whose memory proclaims the "wonderful works of Christ in his servants."¹⁵

One approaches mystery with an attitude of *awe and adoration*, with a sense of *wonder* before the gift of God; for this reason, one enters the shrine

with the spirit of adoration. Whoever is not capable of experiencing wonder at the work of God, whoever does not perceive the novelty in what God works through His initiative of love, will never be able even to perceive the profound meaning and the beauty of the mystery of the Temple, which is revealed in the shrine. Respect due to the Holy Place expresses the awareness that before the work of God, it is necessary not to be caught in human logic, that expects to define everything on the basis of what is seen and produced, but in an attitude of veneration, rich in awe and a sense of mystery.

Surely, it is necessary to have an adequate *preparation* for a meeting with the shrine to be able to perceive beyond its visible, artistic and folkloric aspects, the gratuitous work of God evoked by various signs: apparitions, miracles, founding events that constitute the real first beginning of every shrine, as a place of faith.

This preparation will be developed, first of all, during the stops in the itinerary that leads the pilgrim to the shrine, as what took place among the pilgrims of Zion who prepared themselves for the great meeting with the Shrine of God by singing the Psalms of ascents (*Ps* 120–134), which are actually true liturgical catechesis on the conditions, nature and fruits of a meeting with the mystery of the Temple.

The topographical arrangement of the shrine and its individual sectors, the respectful behavior that is required of every ordinary visitor, listening to the Word of God, prayer and the celebration of the sacraments will be valid instruments in helping people understand the spiritual significance of what is experienced there. All these actions together will express the welcome given by the shrine, which is open to everyone, and in particular, to the multitude of people who, in the solitude of the secularized and desacralized world, perceive in the bottom of their heart the yearning for and fascination of sanctity.¹⁶

Action of thanks

7. In the second place, the shrine recalls God's initiative and makes us understand that such initiative, fruit of a pure gift, must be received in the spirit of an *action of thanks*.

One enters a shrine first of all to give thanks, conscious that God loved us even before we were capable of loving Him; to express our praise to the Lord for the wonders that He worked (cf. *Ps* 136); to ask Him forgiveness for the sins we have committed; to implore the gift of fidelity in our life as believers and the help necessary for our pilgrimage in time.

In that sense, shrines constitute an exceptional school of prayer where especially the persevering and trusting attitude of the humble gives witness to faith in the promise of Jesus: "Ask and it shall be given to you" (*Mt* 7:7).¹⁷

Thus, perceiving the shrine as a *memorial* of the divine initiative means educating oneself to the action of thanks, nourishing a spirit of reconciliation, contemplation and peace in our hearts. The shrine reminds us that the joy of life is first of all a fruit of the presence of the Holy Spirit who animates

in us even the praise to God. The more we are capable of giving praise to the Lord and of making our life a perennial action of thanks to the Father (cf. *Rm* 12:1), presented in union with the one and perfect thanks of Christ the Priest, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, the more the gift of God will be welcomed and rendered fruitful in us.

From this point of view, the Virgin Mary is "the most excellent model."¹⁸ In the spirit of an action of thanks, she let herself be covered by the shadow of the Spirit (cf. *Lk* 1:35), so that in her, the Word of God may be conceived and given to the people. Looking at her, one understands that the shrine is the place where the gift from above is welcomed, the dwelling in which, as we render thanks, we allow ourselves to be loved by the Lord, exactly according to His example and with His help.

In this way, shrines remind us that where there is no gratitude, the gift is lost; where human persons do not give thanks to their God, who each day, even in the hour of trial, loves them in a new way, the gift remains ineffective.

Shrines testify that the vocation of life is not dissipation, nor flight, but praise, peace and joy. The profound understanding of what a shrine is educates us in living the contemplative dimensions of life, not only inside the shrine but everywhere. And since it is particularly the Sunday Eucharistic celebration that is the culminating point and source of the whole Christian life, lived as a response of gratitude and an offering to the gift from above, the shrine invites us in a very special way to rediscover Sunday, which is "the day of the Lord," and also "lord of the days,"¹⁹ "primordial feast," "there not only to mark the succession of time, but to reveal its profound meaning," which is the glory of God, who is everything in all human beings.²⁰

Sharing and commitment

8. In the third place, as a *memorial* of our origin, the shrine shows that this sense of awe and action of thanks should never be separated from *sharing* and a *commitment* in favor of others. The shrine calls to mind the gift of a God who has loved us so much that he planted His tent among us, to bring us salvation, to be a companion in our life, in solidarity with us in our suffering and in our joy. This divine solidarity is also testified by the founding events of the various shrines. If this is how God loved us, so too are we called to love others (cf. *Jn* 4:12) so that we may be temples of God by our lives. The shrine pushes us towards solidarity, to be "living stones" that brace one another in the construction around the cornerstone which is Christ (1 *Pt* 2:4-5).

It would be useless to live the "time of the shrine" if this would not push us to the "time of the road," to the "time of the mission," and to the "time of service," there where God manifests Himself as love towards the weakest and poorest creatures.

As the words of Jeremiah, cited in the teachings of Jesus, remind us, the temple without faith and a commitment to justice is reduced to a "den of bandits" (cf. *Jer* 7:11; *Mt* 21:13). The shrines mentioned by Amos have no

sense if the Lord is not truly sought in them. Liturgy without life based on justice becomes a farce (cf. *Is* 1:10-20; *Am* 5:21-25; *Hos* 6:6). The prophetic word calls the shrine back to its inspiration, stripping it of empty "sacralism," of idolatry, to make it a fruitful seed of faith and justice in time and space. So then the shrine, memorial of our origin in the Lord, becomes the continuous reminder of the love of God and of a sharing of the gifts received. The visit to the shrine will then show its fruits particularly in charitable commitments, in actions for the promotion of human dignity, of justice and peace, values towards which the faithful will feel called anew.

II THE SHRINE, PLACE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE

Place of the Covenant

9. The mystery of the shrine does not only recall our origin in the Lord, but also reminds us that the God who loved us once no longer ceases to love us. Today, in the concrete moment of history in which we find ourselves, before the contradictions and the sufferings of the present, He is with us. The unanimous voice of the Old and the New Testament testifies that the Temple is not only a place of the memory of a salvific past, but also the setting of the present experience of Grace. The shrine is the *sign of the divine Presence*, the place of an ever new actualization of the alliance of human persons with the Eternal and among themselves. In going to the shrine, the pious Israelite re-discovered the faithfulness of the God of the promise to each "today" of history.²¹

Christian temples are a sign of the living presence of Christ, the new shrine, in the Spirit. Looking at Him, Christ's followers know that God is always living and present among them and for them. The temple is the holy dwelling of the *Ark of the Covenant*, the place where the pact with the living God is actualized, and the people of God is aware that they constitute a community of believers, "a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (1 Pt 2:9). St. Paul reminds us: "So you are no longer aliens or foreign visitors; you are fellow-citizens with the holy people of God and part of God's household. You are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the cornerstone. Every structure knit together in him grows into a holy temple in the Lord; and you, too, in him, are being built up into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph 2:19-22). It is God who, by dwelling among his people and in their hearts, makes the shrine living. The shrine of "dead stones" refers to Him who makes us shrines of "living stones."²²

The shrine is the place of the Spirit because it is the place where the faithfulness of God reaches and transforms us. One goes to the shrine first of all to invoke and receive the Holy Spirit, to bring this Spirit later in all the actions of life. In this sense, the shrine is offered as a constant reminder of the living presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church, given to us by the Risen Christ (cf. Jn 20:22), to the glory of the Father. The shrine is a visible invitation to draw from the invisible spring of living water (cf. Jn 4:14); an invitation which can always be experienced anew to live faithfully according to the alliance with the Eternal in the Church.

Place of the Word

10. The expression "communion of saints," found in the section of the Creed regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, could be used to densely express an aspect of the mystery of the Church, a pilgrim in history. By pervading the members of the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit makes the Church the living shrine of the Lord, as the Second Vatican Council calls to mind: "The Church has more often been called the edifice of God (cf. 1 Cor 3:9). ... This edifice is adorned by various names: the house of God (cf. 1 Tm 3:15) in which dwells His family; the household of God in the Spirit (cf. Eph 2:19-22); 'the dwelling place of God among men' (Rev 21:3); and, especially the holy temple. This temple, symbolized by places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the holy Fathers and, not without reason, is compared in the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. As living stones we here on earth are being built up along with this City (cf. 1 Pt 2:5)."²³

In this holy Temple of the Church, the Spirit acts especially through the signs of the new alliance that the shrine watches over and offers. Among these, there is the Word of God. The shrine is the *place of the Word (of God) par excellence*, in which the Spirit calls to the faith and brings about the "communion of the faithful." It is as important as ever to associate the shrine with the persistent and ardent listening to the Word of God, which is not just any human word, but the very living God in the sign of His Word. The shrine, in which the Word of God resounds, is the place of the Alliance, where God confirms His fidelity to His people, to illuminate their way and to console them.

The shrine can become an excellent place wherein to deepen one's faith, in a privileged place and at a favorable time, different from the ordinary. It can offer occasions of new evangelization. It can contribute to promote popular religiosity that is "rich in values,"²⁴ and bring it to a more exact and mature consciousness of faith;²⁵ it can facilitate the process of inculturation.²⁶

It will therefore be necessary to develop in shrines "a suitable catechesis,"²⁷ which, "while it is to take into account the events that are celebrated in the places to be visited and their peculiar nature, it should not forget either the necessary hierarchy in the exposition of the truths of the faith or a moment within the liturgical itinerary in which the whole Church participates."²⁸

In this pastoral service of evangelization and catechesis, it is necessary to underline the specific aspects connected to the memory of the shrine in which one works, to the particular message linked to it, to the "charism" which the Lord entrusted to it and which the Church recognized, and to the often very rich patrimony of traditions and customs that have been established there.

In the same perspective of service to evangelization, it will be possible to have recourse to cultural and artistic initiatives, like congresses, seminars, exhibits, reviews, contests and presentations on religious themes. "In the

past, our shrines were filled with religious mosaics, paintings, sculptures to teach the faith. Will we have enough spiritual vigor and genius to create 'efficacious images' which are of high quality, that are suitable to today's culture?"²⁹

To this end, it is indispensable that, in the shrine, there be a presence of pastoral agents capable of leading to a dialogue with God and to the contemplation of the immense mystery that enfolds and attracts us. The relevance of the ministry of priests, religious and communities in charge of shrines must be underlined,³⁰ and consequently, the importance of their specific formation, commensurate to the service they have to carry out. At the same time, it is necessary to promote the contribution of lay people who are trained for a commitment in catechesis and in evangelization related to the life of shrines. This should be such that also in shrines, the wealth in charisms and ministries that the Holy Spirit gives birth to in the Church of the Lord, would be expressed and pilgrims would benefit from the multiple witness given by the various agents of pastoral care.

Place of sacramental encounter

11. Shrines, places in which the Spirit speaks also through the specific message linked to each one of them and recognized by the Church, are also *privileged sacramental places*. This is especially true for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, in which the Word finds its densest and most efficacious realization. The sacraments actualize the encounter of the living with Him who renders them continuously alive and nourishes them with ever new life in the consolation of the Holy Spirit. They are not repetitious rites, but events of salvation, personal encounters with the living God, who in the Spirit reaches all those who go to Him hungry and thirsty for His truth and His peace. When a sacrament is celebrated in the shrine, therefore, it is not that *something* "is done," but *Someone* is encountered. Rather, it is Someone, the Christ, who becomes present in the grace of the Spirit to communicate Himself to us and change our life, incorporating us more and more fruitfully into the community of the covenant, that is the Church.

A place of encounter with the Lord of life, the shrine as such is a sure sign of the active presence of God in the midst of His people, because in there, through His Word and the sacraments, He communicates himself to us. One goes to the shrine therefore as he would to the Temple of the living God, to the place of the living Alliance with Him, so that the grace of the sacraments may free the pilgrims from sin and concede them the strength to start all over again with new freshness and new joy in the heart, to be, among human beings, transparent witnesses of the Eternal.

Pilgrims often reach the shrines particularly willing to ask for the grace of pardon and they must be helped to open themselves to the Father, "rich in mercy" (*Eph* 2:4),³¹ in truth and in freedom, with full awareness and responsibility, such that from the encounter of grace, a truly new life would be born.

An appropriate communitarian penitential liturgy could help in living better the personal celebration of the sacrament of Penance, which "is the means to satisfy the human person with the justice that comes from the Redeemer himself."³² The place in which such celebration takes place must be appropriately arranged to foster recollection.³³

Since "pardon, freely granted by God, implies in consequence a real change of life, a gradual elimination of evil within, a renewal in our way of living," pastoral agents in the shrines should sustain the pilgrims' perseverance in the fruits of the Spirit in all ways possible. Besides, they should pay special attention to the offering of the expression of the "total gift of the mercy of God," the indulgence. Through it "the repentant sinner receives a remission of the temporal punishment due for the sins already forgiven as regards the fault."³⁴ In the profound experience of the "communion of saints" that the pilgrim lives in the shrine, it will be easier for him to understand "how much each of us can help others—living or dead—to become ever more intimately united with the Father in heaven."³⁵

With regard to the celebration of the Eucharist, it is to be kept in mind that it is the center and the heart of the whole life of the shrine, an event of grace in which "contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth."³⁶ For this reason, it is opportune that the unity that gushes forth from the sacrament of the Eucharist be manifested in a special way, by gathering together in the same celebration the various groups of visitors. In the same way, the Eucharistic presence of the Lord Jesus is to be adored not only individually, but also by all pilgrim groups through special acts of piety prepared with great care, just as what in fact takes place in very many shrines, in the conviction that the "Eucharist contains and expresses all the forms of prayer."³⁷

Above all, the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist gives a particular dignity to the shrines: "They should not be on the fringe or accessories but, on the contrary, essential places, places where people go to obtain grace, even before they obtain favors."³⁸

Place of ecclesial communion

12. Regenerated by the Word (of God) and the sacraments, those who came to the shrine of "dead stones" become the shrine of "living stones" and in this way, they are in the position to live a *renewed experience* of the communion of faith and holiness that is the Church. In this sense, it can be said that in the shrine, the Church of living people can be born in the living God. It is there that each one can rediscover the gift that the creativity of the Spirit gave him for the benefit of all. It is also in the shrine that each one can discern and bring to maturity one's own vocation and fulfill it in the service to others, especially in the parish community, where human differences are brought together and drawn into *ecclesial communion*.³⁹ Thus, it is necessary to give scrupulous attention to the pastoral care of vocations and of the fam-

ily, "privileged place and shrine where all the great and intimate vicissitudes of each unrepeatable human person takes place."⁴⁰

Communion with the Holy Spirit, realized through the communion with the holy realities of the Word and the sacraments, generates the communion of saints, the people of God the most high, rendered such by the Holy Spirit. In a particular way, the Virgin Mary, "model of the Church in the matter of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ,"⁴¹ venerated as she is in many shrines,⁴² helps the faithful to understand and welcome this action of the Holy Spirit that brings about the communion of saints in Christ.

The intense experience of the unity of the Church that is lived in shrines can also help pilgrims discern and welcome the impulse of the Spirit that pushes them in a special way to pray and work in view of the unity of all Christians.⁴³ Ecumenical commitment may find shrines places where (ecumenical) promotion is exceptional, since in them, the change of heart and holiness of life that are "the soul of the whole ecumenical movement"⁴⁴ is promoted, and the grace of unity granted by the Lord is experienced. Besides, in the shrine, "sharing in spiritual activities and resources" can be concretely realized, especially in prayer offered in common and in the common use of sacred places,⁴⁵ which greatly promotes the way of unity, when conducted with the maximum respect for the criteria established by the pastors.

This experience as Church must be particularly supported by an appropriate welcome of pilgrims in the shrine, which takes into consideration the specific characteristics of each group and each person, of the expectations of hearts and their authentic spiritual needs.

In the shrine, we learn to open our heart to everyone, in particular to those who are different from us: the guest, the stranger, the immigrant, the refugee, the one who professes another religion, the non-believer. Thus, aside from offering itself as a space for an experience as Church, the shrine becomes a place of convocation open to the whole of mankind.

In fact, it must be noted that on many occasions, due both to historical and cultural traditions and to circumstances favored by modern human mobility, Christ's faithful meet as companions in pilgrimages to shrines, both their brothers who are members of other Churches and ecclesial Communities as well as the faithful of other religions. The certainty that the plan of salvation embraces them, too,⁴⁶ the recognition of their oftentimes exemplary fidelity to their own religious convictions,⁴⁷ the experience of the same events of history lived in common open a new horizon that show how urgent are ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, which shrines help us live in the presence of the holy Mystery of God, who welcomes everyone.⁴⁸ Yet, it is necessary to keep in mind that shrines are places of a meeting with Christ through the Word and the sacraments. For this reason, it is necessary to continuously be on the watch to avoid all possible forms of syncretism. At the same time, shrines are set as a sign of contradiction with respect to pseudo-spiritualistic movements, like New Age for example. This is because, to a

general religious sentiment based exclusively on the development of the human faculties, shrines oppose a strong sense of the primacy of God and the need to open up to His salvific action in Christ for the full realization of human existence.

III

THE SHRINE, PROPHECY OF THE HEAVENLY HOMELAND

Sign of hope

13. The shrine, *memorial* of our origin in the Lord and sign of the divine presence, is also a *prophecy* of our ultimate and definitive homeland: the Kingdom of God, which will be realized when "I shall set my shrine among (the people) forever," according to the promise of the Eternal (Ez 37:26).

The sign of the shrine does not only remind us from where we come and who we are, but also opens our eyes to discern where we are going, towards what aim our pilgrimage in life and in history is directed. The shrine, as a work of human hands, points to the heavenly Jerusalem, our Mother, the city that comes down from God, all adorned as a bride (cf. Rev 21:2), perfect eschatological shrine where the glorious divine presence is direct and personal: "I could not see any temple in the city since the Lord Almighty and the Lamb were themselves the temple" (Rev 21:22). In that city-temple there will be no more tears, no more sadness, or suffering, or death (cf. Rev 21:4).

Thus the shrine is offered as a *prophetic sign of hope*, a reference to a greater horizon which reveals the promise that does not delude. In the contradictions of life, the shrine, an edifice of stones, becomes an indicator of the foreseen Homeland, although not yet possessed. Its expectation, full of faith and hope, sustains the journey of the disciples of Christ. In this sense, it is significant that after the great trials of the exile, the chosen people felt the need to express the sign of hope by re-building the Temple, a shrine of adoration and praise. Israel made every sacrifice possible so that this sign would be returned to his eyes and heart. It would not only remind him of the love of God who chose him and lives in his midst, but would also call him back to the nostalgia of the ultimate aim of the promise towards which the pilgrims of God of all times are traveling. The eschatological event on which the faith of Christians is founded, is the reconstruction of the temple-body of the Crucified, effected through His glorious resurrection, pledge of our hope (cf. 1 Cor 15:12-28).

A living icon of this hope is above all the presence of the sick and the suffering in shrines.⁴⁹ Meditation on the salvific action of God helps them understand that through their sufferings, they participate in a privileged manner in the healing force of the redemption accomplished in Christ⁵⁰ and before the world, they proclaim the victory of the Risen One. Beside them, all those who accompany and assist them with active charity are witnesses of the hope of the Kingdom, inaugurated by the Lord Jesus, starting exactly with the poor and the suffering: "Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind see again, the lame walk, those suffering from virulent

skin-diseases are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the good news is proclaimed to the poor" (*Lk* 7:22).

An invitation to joy

14. The hope that does not let down (cf. *Rm* 5:5) fills the heart with joy (cf. *Rm* 15:13). In the shrine, the people of God learn to be the "Church of joy." Whoever entered the mystery of the shrine knows that God is already at work in this human adventure, that already now, in spite of the darkness of the present time, it is the dawn of the time that must come, that the Kingdom of God is already present and, for this reason, our heart can already be full of joy, of trust, of hope, in spite of the pain, the death, the tears and the blood that cover the face of the earth.

Psalm 122, one of the psalms sung by the pilgrims journeying towards the Temple, says: "I rejoiced that they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of Yahweh.'..." It is a witness that resounds the sentiments of all those who go to the shrine, first of all the joy of meeting with their brothers (cf. *Ps* 133:1).

In the shrine, we celebrate the "joy of pardon" that pushes us to "celebrate and rejoice" (*Lk* 15:32), because "there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner" (*Lk* 15:10). Here gathered together around the same table of the Word and the Eucharist, we experience the "joy of communion" with Christ, that Zaccheus experienced when he welcomed Him in his house "joyfully" (*Lk* 19:6). This is the "perfect joy" (*Jn* 15:11) that no one can ever take away (cf. *Jn* 16:23) kept in a faithful heart which has itself become a living temple of the Eternal, a shrine of flesh, of the adoration of Him in Spirit and truth. With the Psalmist, each pilgrim is invited to say: "I shall go to the altar of God, to the God of my joy. I will rejoice and praise you on the harp, O God, my God" (*Ps* 43:4).

Call to conversion and renewal

15. The sign of the shrine gives witness that we are not made to live and die, but to live and win over death in the victory of Christ. As a consequence, the community that celebrates its God in the shrine remembers it is a pilgrim Church towards the promised Land, in a state of *continuous conversion and renewal*. The present shrine is not the last harbor. As they taste the love of God there, the faithful recognize the fact that they have not arrived. Rather, they feel a stronger nostalgia for the heavenly Jerusalem, the desire for heaven. Thus, the shrine makes us recognize, on one hand, the holiness of those to whom they are dedicated and, on the other hand, our condition as sinners who must begin the pilgrimage towards Grace anew each day. In this way, they help discover that the Church "is at the same time holy and always in need of being purified"⁵¹ because its members are sinners.

The Word of God helps us keep this call alive, especially through the criticism made by the prophets of the shrine reduced to a place of empty ritualism: "Who has asked you to trample through my courts? Bring no more futile

cereal offerings, the smoke from them fills me with disgust. New moons, Sabbaths, assemblies—I cannot endure solemnity combined with guilt ... Cease doing evil. Learn to do good, search for justice, discipline the violent, be just to the orphan, plead for the widow" (*Is* 1:12-17). Sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken, contrite heart (cf. *Ps* 51:17). As Jesus affirmed: "It is not anyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' who will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven" (*Mt* 7:21).

Continuous conversion is inseparable from the proclamation of the horizon towards which theological hope stretches out. Each time the community of the faithful gathers together in the shrine, it does so to remind itself of the other shrine, the future city, the dwelling of God that we want to start building already in this world and that we, full of hope and aware of our limits, committed to the preparation, as much as possible, of the advent of the Kingdom, cannot help desiring. The mystery of the shrine thus reminds the Church, pilgrim on earth, of her condition of temporariness, the fact that she is walking towards a greater aim, the future homeland, that fills the heart with hope and peace. This stimulus to constant conversion in hope, this witness of the primacy of the Kingdom of God, of which the Church is the beginning and the first fruit, must be particularly taken care of in the pastoral action of the shrine, to serve the growth of the community and of the individual faithful.

Symbol of the new heavens and the new earth

16. The shrine assumes a *prophetic importance*, because it is a sign of a greater hope, that points to the ultimate and definitive goal, where each person will be fully a human person, respected and realized according to the justice of God. For this reason, it becomes the constant reminder to criticize the myopia of all human realizations, that would like to dominate as if they were absolute. The shrine can therefore be considered as a protest against every worldly presumption, against every political dictatorship, against every ideology that wishes to say everything regarding the human being, because the shrine reminds us that there is another dimension, that of the Kingdom of God that must come fully. In the shrine, the *Magnificat* resounds constantly. In it, the Church "sees uprooted that sin which is found at the early history of man and woman, the sin of disbelief and of 'little faith' in God," and in it, "Mary boldly proclaims the undimmed truth about God: the holy and almighty God, who from the beginning is the source of all gifts, he who 'has done great things in her.'"⁵²

In the shrine, witness is given to the eschatological dimension of the Christian faith, that is, its tension towards the fullness of the Kingdom. On this dimension is founded and blossoms the ethico-political vocation of the faithful to be, in history, the evangelically critical conscience of human proposals, that reminds men and women of their greater destiny, that impedes them from growing wretched in the myopia of what is being done, and

obliges them to unceasingly be like leaven (cf. *Mt* 13:33) for a more just and more humane society.

Exactly because it is a reminder of another dimension, that of the "new heavens and the new earth" (*Rev* 21:1), the shrine stimulates us to live as a critical and prophetic ferment in these present heavens and in this present earth and renews the vocation of the Christian to live in the world, although not being of the world (cf. *Jn* 17:16). Such a vocation is a refusal of the ideological instrumentalization of any sign, to be a stimulating presence at the service of the edification of the whole person in each person according to the will of the Lord.

In this light, one can understand that an attentive pastoral action can make shrines become places of education to ethical values, particularly justice, solidarity, peace, safeguard of creation to contribute to the growth of the quality of life for everyone.

CONCLUSION

Convergence of efforts

17. The shrine is not only a human work, but is also a visible sign of the presence of the invisible God. For this reason, an appropriate *convergence of human efforts* and an adequate awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the agents of pastoral care of shrines are required. This is precisely to promote the full recognition and fruitful welcome of the gift that the Lord gives to His people through each shrine.

The shrine offers a precious service to each individual particular Church, above all by attending to the proclamation of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.⁵³ This service expresses and vivifies the historical and spiritual bonds that shrines have with the Churches in whose heart they were born. It requires the full incorporation of pastoral action carried out by the shrine into that of the bishops', giving particular attention to what belongs more to the "charism" of the place and to the spiritual good of the faithful who go there on pilgrimage.

Under the guidance of the individual bishops or of the whole Episcopal Conference, depending on each case, shrines define their specific pastoral identity and their organizational structure, which must be expressed in their own statutes.⁵⁴ However, this participation of shrines in the diocesan pastoral care requires that arrangements be made for the specific preparation of the persons and the communities that will be in charge of it.

It will be equally important to promote the collaboration and the formation of associations among shrines, especially those of the same geographical and cultural area, and the coordination of their pastoral action with the pastoral care of tourism and human mobility in general. The multiplication of initiatives in this sense—from congresses at a worldwide level, to continental and national meetings⁵⁵—underline the increasing flow of people to shrines. They stimulate the awareness that there are new urgent matters and foster new pastoral responses to the changing challenges of places and times.

Thus, the "mystery of the temple" offers a wealth of stimuli that should be meditated on and made to bear fruit in action. As a *memorial* of our origin, the shrine calls to mind the initiative of God and makes it such that pilgrims receive it with a sense of awe, gratitude and commitment. As a place of the divine *Presence*, it gives witness to the faithfulness of God and His unceasing action in the midst of His people, through the Word and the sacraments. As *Prophecy*, or a reference to the heavenly homeland, it is a reminder that not everything has been accomplished, but must still be accomplished fully, according to God's promise, towards which we are going. Precisely by showing the relativity of everything that is next to the last with respect to the ultimate homeland, shrines reveal Christ as the new Temple of mankind reconciled with God.

Keeping in mind these three theological dimensions of the shrine, the pastoral care of shrines will have to take care of the continuous renewal of spiritual life and ecclesial commitment, in an intense critical vigilance towards all cultures and human realizations, but also in a spirit of collaboration, open to the exigencies of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue.

Mary, living shrine

18. The Virgin Mary is the living shrine of the Word of God, the Ark of the new and eternal covenant. In fact, Luke gives form to the narration of the annunciation of the angel to Mary on an elegant composition, with images of the tent of meeting with God in Sinai and of the temple of Zion. As the cloud covered the people of God marching in the desert (cf. *Nm* 10:34; *Dt* 33:12; *Ps* 91:4) and as the same cloud, sign of the divine mystery present in the midst of Israel, stayed over the Ark of the Covenant (cf. *Ex* 40:35), so also now the shadow of the Most High envelops and penetrates the tabernacle of the new covenant that is the womb of Mary (cf. *Lk* 1:35).

Indeed, Luke the evangelist subtly links the words of the angel to the song that the prophet Zephaniah raises to the presence of God in Zion. To Mary, the angel says: "Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favor! The Lord is with you ... Mary, do not be afraid ... You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son ..." (*Lk* 1:28-31). To Zion, the prophet says: "Rejoice, exult with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem! ... Yahweh is king among you, Israel, you have nothing more to fear ... Zion, have no fear ... Yahweh your God is there with you, the warrior-Savior" (*Zp* 3:14-17). In the "womb" (*be qereb*) of the daughter of Zion, symbol of Jerusalem, seat of the temple, the presence of God with his people is manifested. In the womb of the new daughter of Zion, the Lord sets his perfect Temple towards a full communion with mankind through his Son, Jesus Christ.

The theme is confirmed in the scene of Mary's visit to Elizabeth. The question that the latter addresses to the future mother of Jesus is an allusion: "Why should I be honored with a visit from the mother of my Lord?" (*Lk* 1:43). The words, in fact, refer to those of David before the Ark of the Lord: "How can the ark of Yahweh come to be with me?" (*2 Sam* 6:9). Mary therefore, is the new Ark of the presence of the Lord. Among other things, here, the title *Kyrios*, "Lord," applied to Christ, appears for the first time in the Gospel of Luke. This is the title that translated the sacred name *Jhwh* in the Greek Bible. As the Ark of Yahweh remained in the house of Obed-Edom of Gath for three months, filling it with blessings (cf. *2 Sam* 6:11), so also Mary, the living Ark of God, remained three months in the house of Elizabeth with her sanctifying presence (cf. *Lk* 1:56).

In this regard, the affirmation of St. Ambrose is enlightening: "Mary was the temple of God, not the God of the temple, and therefore only he who acted in the temple must be adored."⁵⁶ For this reason, "the Church, throughout her life, maintains with the Mother of God a link which

embraces, in the saving mystery, the *past*, the *present* and the *future*, and venerates her as the spiritual mother of humanity and the advocate of grace,"⁵⁷ as is shown by the presence of numerous Marian shrines all over the world,⁵⁸ which constitute an authentic "missionary Magnificat."⁵⁹

In the Marian shrine, the Holy Father affirms, "not only individuals or local groups, but sometimes whole nations and societies, even whole continents, seek to meet the Mother of the Lord, the one who is blessed because she believed, is the first among believers and therefore became the Mother of Emmanuel. This is the message of the Land of Palestine, the spiritual homeland of all Christians because it was the homeland of the Savior of the world and of his Mother. This is the message of the many churches in Rome and throughout the world which have been raised up in the course of the centuries by the faith of Christians. This is the message of centers like Guadalupe, Lourdes, Fatima and the others situated in the various countries. Among them how could I fail to mention the one in my own native land, Jasna Góra? One could perhaps speak of a specific 'geography' of faith and Marian devotion, which includes all these special places of pilgrimage where the People of God seek to meet the Mother of God in order to find, within the radius of the maternal presence of her 'who believed,' a strengthening of their own faith."⁶⁰

To this end, those who have the responsibility for the pastoral care of shrines should pay constant attention so that the various expressions of Marian piety would be integrated into the liturgical life which is the center and the definition of the shrine.

In approaching Mary, pilgrims must feel themselves called to live that "paschal dimension"⁶¹ which gradually transforms their life through the reception of the Word, the celebration of the sacraments and a commitment in favor of their brothers and sisters.

From the communitarian and personal meeting with Mary, "Star of evangelization,"⁶² pilgrims, like the Apostles, will be encouraged to proclaim through their word and witness of life "the marvels of God" (*Acts* 2:11).

Vatican City, May 8, 1999

✠ Archbishop Stephen Fumio Hamao

President

✠ Archbishop Francesco Gioia

Secretary

NOTES

- 1 Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000* (April 11, 1998), 32; the text refers to Ex 27:21; 29:4, 10-11, 30, 32, 42, 44.
- 2 Cf. cited document of the Pontifical Council; document of the Italian Episcopal Conference "*Venite, saliamo sul monte del Signore*" (Is 2:3). *Il pellegrinaggio alle soglie del terzo millennio* (June 29, 1998).
- 3 *The Code of Canon Law*, can. 1230.
- 4 *Ibid.*, can. 1234, 1.
- 5 Pope John Paul II, *Homily* at the city of Corrientes, Argentina (April 9, 1987).
- 6 Pope John Paul II, *Angelus* (July 12, 1992).
- 7 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 6.
- 8 The various shrines that Israel had (Shechem, Bethel, Beersheba, Silo) are all linked to the stories of the Patriarchs and are memorials of the encounter with the living God.
- 9 *Epist.* 3,1: *Sources Chrétiennes* 363, 124.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 3,2: *SCb* 363, 126.
- 11 In shrines, it is possible "to enkindle the fire of divine love in every home," as Theodoret of Cyr observes with regard to the Church built in honor of St. Thecla (*Historia Religiosa* 29, 7: *SCb* 257, 239).
- 12 St. Augustine, *Letter to Proba*, 130, 8, 15.
- 13 St. Augustine, *Comment to the letter of John*, IX, 9.
- 14 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 65.
- 15 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 111.
- 16 Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Homily* in the shrine of Belém, Brazil (July 8, 1980).
- 17 *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that "for pilgrims who are in search of their own living springs, shrines are exceptional places where the various forms of Christian prayer may be lived 'as Church'" (2691).
- 18 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 54 and 65.
- 19 Pseudo Eusebio of Alexandria, *Sermons* 16: *PG* 86, 416.
- 20 Pope John Paul II, in the Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (May 31, 1998), affirms: "There is also a rediscovery of ancient religious practices, such as pilgrimages; and often the faithful take advantage of Sunday rest to visit a shrine where, with the whole family perhaps, they can spend time in a more intense experience of faith. These are moments of grace which must be fostered through evangelization and guided by genuine pastoral wisdom" (52).
- 21 This still refers to the Songs of ascents to the temple of Jerusalem and to the image of God, the guardian of Israel, that they present (cf. in particular *Ps* 121 and 127).
- 22 Gregory of Nyssa wrote: "Wherever you are, God will come to you, if the dwelling in your soul is found to be such that the Lord can dwell in you" (*Epistula* 2,16: *SCb* 363, 121).
- 23 Second Vat. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 6.
- 24 Pope Paul VI, Ap. Exhort. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (December 8, 1975), 48.
- 25 Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Homily* in the shrine of Zapotán, Mexico (January 30, 1979).
- 26 Cf. International Theological Commission, Doc. *Fides et Inculcaturo* (1987), III, 2-7.
- 27 Pont. Council for the Pastoral Care for Migrants and Itinerant People, *Walk towards the splendour of God, your God walks with you*. Proceedings of the First World Congress on the Pastoral Care of Shrines and Pilgrimages (Rome, February 26-29, 1992), Final Document, 8, p. 216.
- 28 *Pilgrimage in the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000*, 34.
- 29 Pope John Paul II, *Message* for the 50th anniversary of the International Catholic Organization for Cinema (October 31, 1978).
- 30 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 4.
- 31 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Dives in Misericordia* (November 30, 1980), 1.

- 32 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Redemptor Hominis* (March 4, 1979), 20.
- 33 For the fundamental lines regarding catechesis and the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation, cf. Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apost. Exhort. *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (December 2, 1984).
- 34 Pope John Paul II, Bull of indiction of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 *Incarnationis Mysterium* (November 20, 1998), 9.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 10. Cf. Paul VI, Apost. Const. *Indulgentiarum Doctrina* (January 1, 1967).
- 36 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 5.
- 37 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2653; cf. Paul VI, Enc. Lett. *Mysterium Fidei* (September 3, 1965); Congr. For Divine Worship, *Inst. Inaestimabile Donum* (April 3, 1980).
- 38 Pope John Paul II, Letter to Archbishop Pasquale Macchi on the Seventh Centenary of the Shrine of the Holy House of Loreto (August 15, 1993), 7.
- 39 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 10.
- 40 Pope John Paul II, Discourse at the General Audience (January 3, 1979); cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 11.
- 41 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 63.
- 42 Pope John Paul II affirms: "Marian shrines are like the house of the Mother, pause and rest points on the long road that brings to Christ. They are factories, where, through the simple and humble faith of the 'poor in spirit' (cf. Mt 5:3), one comes in contact again with the great wealth that Christ has entrusted and granted to the Church, particularly the Sacraments, grace, mercy, charity towards the suffering and sick brothers" (*Angelus*, June 21, 1987).
- 43 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 4.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 45 Pont. Council for the Unity of Christians, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (March 25, 1993), 29 and 103.
- 46 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 16.
- 47 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Redemptor Hominis* (March 4, 1979), 6.
- 48 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Ap. Lett. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (November 10, 1994), pp. 52-53.
- 49 Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Homily* during the Holy Mass for the sick in St. Peter's Basilica (February 11, 1990).
- 50 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 41; cf. Pope John Paul II, Ap. Lett. *Salvifici Doloris* (February 11, 1984).
- 51 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 8; cf. Decr. *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 6-7.
- 52 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Redemptoris Mater* (March 25, 1987), 37.
- 53 It is instead particularly appropriate for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and matrimony to be celebrated in the parish of residence, thus helping the faithful grasp the communitarian significance of these sacraments; cf. Pope John Paul II, Ap. Exhort. *Christifideles Laici* (December 30, 1988), 26.
- 54 *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1232. In this sense, the French Episcopal Conference, for example, elaborated a Charter of Shrines.
- 55 The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People works in this direction, as is shown by the organization of two World Congresses (Rome, February 26-29, 1992 and Ephesus, Turkey, May 4-7, 1998) and of two at a regional level (Máriapocs, Hungary, September 2-4, 1996 and Pompeii, Italy, October 17-21, 1998), cf. related Proceedings.
- 56 *De Spiritu Sancto* III, 11:80.
- 57 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Redemptoris Mater* (March 25, 1987), 47.

- 58 Pope John Paul II reminds us: "I know very well that every people, every country, indeed every diocese, has its holy places in which the heart of the whole people of God beats, one could say, in more lively fashion: places of special encounter between God and human beings; places in which Christ dwells in a special way in our midst. If these places are so often dedicated to his Mother, it reveals all the more fully to us the nature of his Church," *Homily* in the shrine of Our Lady of Knock, Ireland (September 30, 1979).
- 59 Pope John Paul II, *Message* to the Third Latin American Missionary Congress (Bogota, July 6, 1987).
- 60 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Lett. *Redemptoris Mater* (March 25, 1987), 28.
- 61 Cong. for Divine Worship, Circular Letter to the Presidents of the National Liturgical Commissions *Orientamenti e proposte per la celebrazione dell'Anno mariano* (April 3, 1987), 78 *Notitiae* 23 (1987), p. 386.
- 62 Pope Paul VI, Ap. Exhort. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (December 8, 1975), 82.

THE PILGRIMAGE

IN THE GREAT JUBILEE
OF THE YEAR 2000

INTRODUCTION

1. "We are strangers before you, pilgrims only as were all our ancestors."¹ The words King David pronounced before the Lord sketch the profile not only of the biblical person but of every human creature. In fact, the "way" is a symbol of existence which is expressed in a wide range of actions like leaving and coming back, entrance and exit, descent and ascent, walking and resting. Since the very first moment of their appearance on the stage of the world, human beings have always walked in search of new goals, investigating earthly horizons and tending towards the infinite. They navigated rivers and seas, climbed sacred mountains on whose summit the earth ideally meets the sky. They walked through time marking it with sacred dates. They considered birth as an entrance into the world and death as an exit to enter the womb of the earth or to be assumed into the divine regions.

2. Pilgrimages, a sign of the condition of the disciples of Christ in this world,² have always held an important place in the life of Christians.

In the course of history, Christians have always walked to celebrate their faith in places that indicate a memory of the Lord or in sites representing important moments in the history of the Church. They have come to shrines honoring the Mother of God and to those that keep the example of the saints alive. Their pilgrimage was a process of conversion, a yearning for intimacy with God and a trusting plea for their material needs. For the Church, pilgrimages, in all their multiple aspects, have always been a gift of Grace.

In contemporary society, which is characterized by intense mobility, pilgrimages are experiencing a new impetus. To offer a suitable response to this reality, the pastoral care of pilgrimages must be able to avail of a clear theological foundation that explains it and develops a solid and permanent praxis in the context of general pastoral care. It is necessary to keep in mind, first of all, that evangelization is the ultimate reason for which the Church proposes and encourages pilgrimages, such that they are transformed into an experience of deep and mature faith.³

3. Through the reflections in this document, it is hoped to offer an aid to all pilgrims and people in charge of the pastoral care of pilgrimages, so that in the light of the Word of God and of the age-old tradition of the Church, everyone may share more fully in the spiritual wealth found in the experience of pilgrimages.

I

THE PILGRIMAGE OF ISRAEL

4. Since the beginning, according to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and later on, all through the millennia, it is possible to identify an *adamic pilgrimage*: it starts with coming forth from the hands of the Creator, from the entry into the world of creation and from the subsequent wandering without aim, far from the garden of Eden.⁴ The pilgrimage of Adam—from the call to walk with God, to his disobedience and to the hope for salvation—reveals the full freedom with which he was gifted by the Creator. At the same time, it discloses the divine commitment to walk beside him and watch over his steps.

At first sight, Adam's pilgrimage seems to be a deviation from the way towards the goal of the Holy Place, the garden of Eden. But even this route can be transformed into a path of conversion and of return. Wandering Cain is watched over by the loving presence of God who follows and protects him.⁵ "You have noted my agitation"—sings Psalm 56:8—"now collect my tears in your wineskin. Should this not be 'in your book?'" Pursuing the way of abandonment of the prodigal son in sin is the father who is prodigal of love. It is through this divine attraction that for every person, every wrong way can be transformed into an itinerary of return and embrace.⁶ Thus, there is a universal history of pilgrimages that includes a dark stage, through "the roads of darkness,"⁷ the crooked paths.⁸ But it also includes return and conversion through the path of life,⁹ of justice and peace,¹⁰ of truth and fidelity,¹¹ of perfection and integrity.¹²

5. The *abrahamic pilgrimage*, instead, is the paradigm of the history of salvation itself in conformity with which the faithful live. The language used in describing it ("leave your country"), the steps in Abraham's itinerary and the relations he experienced affirm that his pilgrimage was already an exodus of salvation, an ideal anticipation of the exodus of the whole nation. By leaving his country, his family and his father's house,¹³ Abraham goes with trust and hope towards the horizon that the Lord indicated, as the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us: "It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to *set out* for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that *he set out* without knowing where he was going. By faith he arrived, *as a foreigner*, in the Promised Land, and lived there as if in a strange country, with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. They lived there in tents while he looked forward to a city founded, designed and built by God ... All these died in faith, ... recognizing that they were only *strangers and nomads on earth*."¹⁴ It is for a good reason that the Patriarch later defined himself "a stranger and a settler"¹⁵ even in the Promised Land and like him were also to be his sons Ishmael¹⁶ and Jacob, refugees in Paddan-aram¹⁷ and in Egypt.¹⁸

6. It was from the land of the pharaohs that the great *exodic pilgrimage* would ensue. The various stages—which included the departure, wandering in the desert, the trial, temptations, sin, entering the Promised Land—have become the exemplary model of the history of salvation¹⁹ itself. This includes not only the gifts of freedom, of Revelation in Sinai and of divine communion, expressed in the Passover (“passage”) and in the offering of the manna, water and the quails, but also infidelity, idolatry, the temptation to go back to slavery.

Exodus acquires a permanent value. It is a “memorial” that is always vital and comes up again even upon the return from the Babylonian exile. This is sung by the Second Isaiah as a new exodus,²⁰ that is commemorated each time Israel celebrates the Feast of the Passover and is transformed into an eschatological representation in the book of Wisdom.²¹ The final aim is in fact the Promised Land of full communion with God in a renewed creation.²²

The Lord himself is a pilgrim with his people: “Yahweh your God ... has watched over your journeying through this vast wilderness. Yahweh your God has been with you these forty years and you have never been in want.”²³ He “preserved us all along the way we traveled.”²⁴ He, in fact, remembers with nostalgia “affection of your youth, the love of your bridal days: you followed me through the wilderness, through a land unsown.”²⁵ Because of this radical characteristic as a pilgrim, the biblical people is not to “molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt”;²⁶ rather, he is to “love the stranger ..., for you were once strangers in Egypt.”²⁷

7. Thus, whoever prays presents himself before God as “your guest ..., a nomad.”²⁸ Precisely by praying, the psalms, which were written across the millenary period of the history of Israel, attest to the historical and theological awareness of the itinerancy of the community and of the individual. And it is exactly through the devotional pilgrimage to Zion that being strangers even in one’s own land²⁹ is transformed into a sign of hope. The “ascent,” which, in the three great solemnities of the Feast of the Passover, Feast of Weeks and Feast of Tabernacles³⁰ leads Israel amidst hymns of joy (the “Song of Ascents”)³¹ towards Mt. Zion, becomes an experience of stability, trust and renewed commitment to live in the fear of God³² and in justice. Founded on the rock of the temple of Jerusalem, symbol of the Lord who is a “rock” that does not crumble,³³ the tribes of Israel praise the name of the Lord.³⁴ They enter into communion with Him in worship, living in the tents of His sanctuary and dwelling on His holy mountain, finding an indestructible salvation³⁵ and a fullness of life and peace.³⁶ Therefore, “happy those who live in your house and can praise you all day long; and happy the pilgrims inspired by you with courage to make the Ascents!”³⁷ “Up! Let us go up to Zion, to Yahweh our God!”³⁸

8. To the people of God, victim of discouragement, burdened by infidelity, the prophets also indicate a Messianic pilgrimage of redemption, which is also open to the eschatological horizon in which all peoples of the earth will stream towards Zion, location of the divine Word, of peace and of hope³⁹ living again the experience of the exodus, the people of God must let the Spirit remove its heart of stone and give it one of flesh.⁴⁰ In its life's itinerary, it must express justice⁴¹ and faithful love⁴² and rise up as a light for all peoples,⁴³ up to the day when the Lord God will offer on the holy mountain a banquet for all peoples.⁴⁴ On the way towards the fulfillment of the messianic promise, already at this very moment, all are called to communion gratuitously⁴⁵ and in God's mercy.⁴⁶

II

CHRIST'S PILGRIMAGE

9. Jesus Christ enters the scene of history as "the Way, the Truth and the Life"⁴⁷ and since the very beginning, he includes himself in the journey of humankind and of his people, uniting himself in some way with each man.⁴⁸ In fact, he descended from being "with God" to become "flesh"⁴⁹ and to walk along the paths of the human person. In the Incarnation, it is "God who comes in Person to speak to man of himself and to show him the path by which He may be reached."⁵⁰

While still a baby, Jesus is a pilgrim at the temple of Zion to be presented to the Lord;⁵¹ as a boy, with Mary and Joseph, he goes to his Father's house.⁵² His public ministry which takes place along the roads of his country, slowly takes the form of a pilgrimage towards Jerusalem which is portrayed, especially by Luke, as a long journey whose destination is not only the cross, but also the glory of Easter and the Ascension.⁵³ His Transfiguration reveals to Moses, to Elijah and to the Apostles his impending Paschal "exodus": "they were speaking of his passing which he was to accomplish in Jerusalem."⁵⁴ The other evangelists, too, know this exemplary itinerary, along which the disciple must walk: "If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me," and Luke specifies "every day."⁵⁵ For Mark, the route to the cross of Golgotha is constantly marked by verbs and words of movement and by the symbol of the "way."⁵⁶

10. But Jesus' road does not end on the hill called Golgotha. The earthly pilgrimage of Christ crosses the boundary of death, into the infinite and in the mystery of God, beyond death. On the mount of the Ascension, the final step of his pilgrimage takes place. As he promises to come back,⁵⁷ the risen Lord rises to Heaven and goes to his Father's house to prepare a place for us, so that where he is, we may be with him, too.⁵⁸ In fact, this is how he summarizes his mission: "I came from the Father and have come into the world and now I leave the world to go to the Father. ... Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me."⁵⁹

The Christian community, animated by the Spirit of Pentecost, goes out into the streets of the world, and is immersed in the various nations of the earth.⁶⁰ It goes from Jerusalem up to Rome, along the streets of the empire which the Apostles and the heralds of the Gospel walk through. Beside them walks Christ who, as with the disciples of Emmaus, explains the Scriptures to them and breaks the Eucharistic bread.⁶¹ Along their footsteps set out the peoples of the earth. Spiritually following the itinerary of the Magi,⁶² they fulfill the words of Christ: "Many will come from east and to take their places with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven."⁶³

11. The final destination of this pilgrimage along the roads of the world, however, is not written on the map of the earth. It is beyond our horizon, as it was for Christ who walked with the people to bring them to the fullness of communion with God. It is significant to observe that the "way" of the Lord is the road that he walked through and along which he now walks with us. In fact, the Acts of the Apostles describes the Christian life as "the way"⁶⁴ *par excellence*. Therefore, after having gone to teach all nations accompanied by the presence of Christ who is with us to the end of time,⁶⁵ after having been "guided by the Spirit"⁶⁶ in justice and love, the Christian takes as his port of arrival the heavenly Jerusalem sung in the Apocalypse. This way/life is filled with a yearning, an ardent hope in the expectation of the coming of the Lord.⁶⁷ Our pilgrimage, therefore, has a transcendent end, knowing that we are "aliens or foreign visitors"⁶⁸ here on earth, but are destined to be "citizens like all the saints, and part of God's household."⁶⁹

Like Jesus who was killed outside the gates of the city of Jerusalem, we too must go "outside the camp, and share his degradation. For there is no eternal city for us in this life but we look for one in the life to come."⁷⁰ There God will dwell with us, in that place "there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone."⁷¹

III

THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE CHURCH

12. In communion with her Lord, the Church also, a messianic people, is going forward towards a future and abiding city.⁷² It transcends time and boundaries, and completely tends towards that Kingdom whose presence is already operating in all the lands of the earth. These lands have received the seed of the word of Christ⁷³ and have been watered by the blood of martyrs, witnesses of the Gospel. As Paul and the Apostles did, the missionaries of Christ crossed the consular and imperial roads, the caravan tracks, the maritime routes, the cities and ports of the Mediterranean. Very soon, in the East and in the West, they had to face various cultures and religious traditions and express themselves no longer just in Hebrew and Aramaic, but also in Greek and Latin and later, in a multiplicity of tongues, some of which had already been previously announced in the scene of Pentecost:⁷⁴ Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopian, Persian, Armenian, Gothic, Slavic, Hindi, Chinese.

The steps in this pilgrimage of the messengers of the divine word branched out from Asia Minor to Italy, from Africa to Spain and Gaul and, later on, from Germany to Britain, from the Slavic countries up to India and China. In modern times, they went on towards new countries and new peoples in America, Africa and Oceania, thus delineating "the journey of Christ down the centuries."⁷⁵

13. In the fourth and fifth centuries, later on, various experiences of monastic life in the Church began. "Ascetic migration" and "spiritual exodus" represent two of its fundamental and inspiring forms. In this regard, some biblical figures assume a paradigmatic role in monastic and patristic literature. The reference to Abraham is linked with the theme of *xeniteia* (the experience of the stranger: the awareness of one who is a guest, migrant), which, among other things, constitutes the third step of the spiritual *Ladder* of St. John Climacus. The figure of Moses, who guides the exodus from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land, becomes a characteristic theme of ancient Christian literature, thanks especially to the *Life of Moses* of Gregory of Nyssa. Finally, Elijah, who climbs the Carmel and Mt. Horeb, incarnates the themes of the flight into the desert and the encounter with God. Ambrose, for example, is fascinated by the Prophet Elijah and considers the ascetic ideal of the *fuga saeculi* realized in him.

The concept of Christian life as a pilgrimage, the search for divine intimacy, also by means of a detachment from the tumult of things and events, the veneration of Holy Places persuaded St. Jerome and the disciples Paula and Eustochium to leave Rome and settle in the land of Christ. Thus, in the grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem, a monastery was founded. This formed part of a series of numerous hermitages, *lauras*, *cenobia* in the Holy Land, but

which were also spread in other regions, especially in the Egyptian Tebaide, in Syria, in Cappadocia. Following this line, pilgrimages in the desert or towards a Holy Place became the symbol of another pilgrimage, the interior one, as St. Augustine called to mind: "Go back into yourself: the truth lives in the person's heart." Yet, do not remain within yourself, but "go beyond your very self,"⁷⁶ because you are not God: He is deeper and greater than you. The pilgrimage of the soul which has already been evoked by Platonic tradition, now acquires a new dimension. In its yearning for the infinity of God, the Father of the Church himself defines and represents it as follows: "One searches God to find him with more sweetness, one finds him to search him with greater ardor."⁷⁷

The concept that "the holy place is the pure soul"⁷⁸ also becomes a constant call for the practice of pilgrimages to Holy Places to be a sign of progress in personal holiness. The Fathers of the Church thus render "physical" pilgrimages relative, in an effort to overcome every exaggeration and misunderstanding. Gregory of Nyssa, in particular, furnishes the fundamental principle of a correct evaluation of pilgrimages. Although he had devoutly visited the Holy Land, he affirms that the true journey to be experienced is the one that leads the faithful from the physical reality to the spiritual one, from corporeal life to life in the Lord, and not the trip from Cappadocia to Palestine.⁷⁹ Even St. Jerome confirms the same principle. In *Lettera* 58, he observes that Anthony and the monks did not visit Jerusalem, and yet the gates of Heaven were wide open for them just the same. And he affirms that for Christians, the motive for praise is not the fact that they have been to the Holy Land, but rather because they have lived holy lives.⁸⁰

In this interior itinerary from light to light,⁸¹ along the trail of Christ's call to be "perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect,"⁸² a profile of pilgrimages is formed, one which is particularly dear to the spiritual Byzantine tradition: it is the "ecstatic" aspect that will later on develop based on the mystical doctrine of Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus the Confessor and John Damascene.

The divinization of the human person is the great aim of the long journey of the spirit that places the believer in the very heart of God, thus fulfilling the words of the Apostle: "I have been crucified with Christ and I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me,"⁸³ therefore "life ... is Christ."⁸⁴

14. In the fourth century, when persecution by the Roman Empire was over, the sites of martyrdom were opened for public veneration and the intense flow of pilgrimages started. This is also testified by documentary records, like the travel diaries of the pilgrims themselves, especially in the Holy Land. Among them stands out the witness of Aetheria, at the beginning of the fifth century.

But concrete pilgrimages that walk through the streets of the world spread out in new branches. While the Arabic conquest of Jerusalem in 638 made the visit to Christian memorials in the Holy Land more difficult, new itineraries in the West were opened. Rome, the site of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul and the seat of ecclesial communion around the successor of Peter, became a fundamental destination. Thus were born the numerous "*Vie Romee*" *ad Petri sedem*, among which stands out *Via Francigena* which crosses the whole of Europe to point at the new holy city. But another goal was the tomb of St. James in Compostella. There were also the Marian shrines of the Holy House of Loreto, Jasna Gora in Czestochowa; visits to the great medieval monasteries, fortresses of the spirit and of culture; the places that incarnate the memory of great saints, like Tours, Canterbury or Padua. Through them a network, which "promoted mutual understanding among such different peoples and nations,"⁸⁵ was formed in Europe.

Although with some exaggerations, this great phenomenon, which involved the common masses that were animated by simple and profound convictions, nourished the spirituality, increased the faith, stimulated the charity and animated the mission of the Church. The "palmer," the "pilgrim to Rome," the "pilgrims" with their specific attires almost constituted their own separate "ordo," that reminded the world of the pilgrim nature of the Christian community, that tends towards a meeting with God and communion with Him.

A special form was attributed to pilgrimages with the advent of the Crusades between the eleventh and the thirteenth centuries. In them, the ancient religious ideal of going on pilgrimage towards the Holy Places of the Sacred Scriptures was mixed with the new instances and ideas typical of that historical period, that is, the formation of the class of knights, with its social and political tensions, the reawakening of commercial stimuli and cultural revolts in the East, the presence of Islam in the Holy Land.

The conflict of power and interest often prevailed over the spiritual and missionary ideal. This attributed particular characteristics to the various Crusades, while the Churches of the East and of the West stood on the wall of division. This also influenced the practice of pilgrimages which were somehow ambiguous, as described well by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. He was an ardent preacher of the second Crusade but he did not hesitate to honor the spiritual Jerusalem present in Christian monasteries as the ideal goal of the pilgrim: "Clairvaux is this Jerusalem united to the heavenly Jerusalem by its profound and radical piety, by its life's conformity, by some spiritual affinity."⁸⁶ A medieval hymn, which is still present in the liturgy, clearly exalted the heavenly Jerusalem which was built on earth through the consecration of a church: "Jerusalem blessed city,/ called image of peace,/ built in the heavens/ out of living stones."⁸⁷

15. At this point St. Francis appeared on the horizon. Through his friars, he would be present in the Holy Land through the centuries, as custodian of the Holy Places for Christianity—in a cohabitation which is not always easy with other Oriental ecclesial communities—and as a support for pilgrims. Sometime around 1300, a *Societas Peregrinantium pro Christo* was established. It considered pilgrimages also as a missionary work. But just at that time, in 1300, the Jubilee was proclaimed in Rome. It was to transform the eternal city into a Jerusalem towards which multitudes of pilgrims would be directed, as what later on took place in the successive long series of Holy Years. The cultural and religious unity of medieval Western Europe was also nourished through these spiritual experiences. Slowly, however, there was a movement towards new and more complex models that also involved the nature of pilgrimages.

16. The Copernican revolution caused an evolution in the condition of pilgrim people in an immobile world, making them partakers of a universe that is in perennial movement. The discovery of the New World established the foundation needed to overcome the eurocentric vision, by means of the appearance of different cultures and the extraordinary movement of people and groups. The Christianity of the West lost its unity centered in Rome, and confessional divisions made pilgrimages more difficult, at times contested “as an occasion of sin and of despise of the commandments of God ... It happens, in fact, that a persons goes on pilgrimage to Rome and spends fifty and a hundred florins and even more and leaves wife and children and maybe a neighbor at home at grips with misery.”⁸⁸ With the disintegration of the classical image of the universe, the pilgrim felt less and less like being a traveler in the common house of the world, now subdivided into States and national Churches. Thus, nearer and alternative goals came up, like the Holy Mounts and local Marian shrines.

17. Yet, in spite of a somehow static vision that pervaded the Christian community in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, pilgrimages continued in the life of the Christian community. In some places, as in Latin America and in the Philippines, they sustained the faith of generations of believers; in other places, a new spirituality came up, with new centers of faith founded on the roots of Marian apparitions and popular devotions. From Guadalupe to Lourdes, from Aparecida to Fatima, from the Santo Niño of Cebu to St. Joseph of Montreal, there is a multiplication of witness to the vitality of pilgrimages and the movement of conversion that they bring about. Meanwhile, the renewed awareness of being the traveling people of God became the most expressive image of the Church assembled in the Second Vatican Council.

IV

PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

18. The Second Vatican Council was “a providential event” destined to constitute an “immediate preparation for the Jubilee of the Second Millennium.”⁸⁹ That ecclesial gathering—from the time it was convoked, with the converging of the pastors of the local Churches in Rome, up to its conclusion with an extraordinary Jubilee that was to be celebrated in each single diocese—was celebrated in the symbolic frame of a great and choral pilgrimage of the whole ecclesial community. This aspect was made explicit by some emblematic gestures, like those of the two pilgrim popes, John XXIII to Loreto during the first years of the Council (1962) and Paul VI in the Holy Land, at the height of the Conciliar gathering (1964). To these two purely spiritual signs were later on added the successive papal pilgrimages along the ways of the world to proclaim the Gospel, its truth and its justice, starting from those of Pope Paul VI to the United Nations and to Bombay.

19. The very language of the Council symbolized the Church—in its experience as a spiritual and missionary itinerary—a travel companion at the side of the whole humankind. It was in fact a matter of asking “how we ought to renew ourselves, so that we may be found increasingly faithful to the gospel of Christ.”⁹⁰ The “pilgrim” Church of God thus became a dominant profile from the very beginning of the conciliar celebration.⁹¹ The Church was “a signal raised amidst peoples (*Is* 5:26) to offer to everyone the direction of his march towards the truth and the life.”⁹² The meeting with the nations, which was symbolically manifested by the visit of Pope Paul VI at the UN, was defined as the “epilogue of a laborious pilgrimage.”⁹³ The Council itself resulted as a “spiritual ascension,” while the Council Fathers greeted the men and women of thought as “pilgrims en route to the light.”⁹⁴

20. The aforementioned pilgrimage of Pope Paul VI to the Holy Land was presented by the Pontiff himself in the light of the spirituality of the *peregrinatio* in its fundamental components. Through visits to the Holy Places, it intended to exalt the central mysteries of salvation, the Incarnation and the Redemption; it wanted to be a sign of prayer, penance and renewal; it aimed to fulfill the triple goal of offering to Christ his Church, of promoting unity among Christians, and of imploring divine mercy for peace among men.⁹⁵

It was the Council itself, in its Constitutions, that presented the whole Church as “present in this world and yet not at home in it.”⁹⁶ Her pilgrim nature, mentioned repeatedly,⁹⁷ reveals a trinitarian aspect: Its source is in the mission of Christ sent by the Father;⁹⁸ for this reason, we, too, go forth from

him, live through him and our journey leads us toward him,⁹⁹ and the Holy Spirit is the guide of our way which is to follow the footsteps of Christ.¹⁰⁰ Eucharist and Easter, which constitute the heart of the liturgy,¹⁰¹ by their very nature, point back to the exodus of Israel and to the banquet of pilgrimage and of alliance that it inaugurates¹⁰² and concludes.¹⁰³

21. The pilgrim Church spontaneously becomes missionary.¹⁰⁴ The command of the Risen Christ: "Go ..., make disciples of all the nations"¹⁰⁵ places its stress precisely on "go," an indispensable method of evangelization open to the world. Viaticum and treasure in this itinerary are the Word of God¹⁰⁶ and the Eucharist.¹⁰⁷

Sketching a passionate synthesis of the march of humankind with its conquests and its going astray,¹⁰⁸ the Council presents the Church as a travel companion of the human family, that indicates a transcendent goal, beyond earthly history.¹⁰⁹ Thus, a fruitful harmony between pilgrimages and commitment in history ensues¹¹⁰ and even the world is called to offer its contribution to the Church itself in a lively and intense dialogue.¹¹¹

22. From the Conciliar event onwards, the Church lives its pilgrim experience not only in its renewal, in its missionary proclamation, in its commitment for peace, but also through numerous witnesses of the magisterium of the Church, particularly on the occasion of the jubilee years 1975, 1983 and 2000.¹¹² The Holy Father Pope John Paul II became a pilgrim in the world. He is the principal evangelizer in these last two decades. Through his apostolic itinerancy and his magisterium, he has guided and solicited the whole Church to prepare itself for the third millennium, which is already close at hand. The papal pastoral trips are "stations of a pilgrimage in the local Churches ..., a pilgrimage of peace and solidarity."¹¹³

23. A fundamental goal of the present historical pilgrimage of the Church is the Jubilee of the Year 2000 towards which the faithful are walking beneath the vault of the Trinity. This itinerary should not be spatial but rather interior and vital, in the re-conquest of the great values of the biblical jubilee year.¹¹⁴ With the sounding of the horn marking this date in Israel, slaves became free again, debts were condoned such that everyone would find again personal dignity and social solidarity, the earth spontaneously offered its gifts to everyone, reminding us that at its origin is the Creator who "water the uplands until the ground has had all that your heavens have to offer."¹¹⁵ Thus, a more fraternal community, similar to that of Jerusalem, must be born: "The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed."¹¹⁶ "Let there be no poor among you ... Is there a poor man among you, one of your brothers ...? Do not harden your heart or close your hand against that poor brother of yours."¹¹⁷

V

THE PILGRIMAGE OF HUMANKIND

24. The pilgrimage which started from Abraham and is extended throughout the centuries is a sign of a vaster and universal movement of humankind. The human person, in fact, appears in his secular history as *homo viator*, a traveler thirsty for new horizons, hungry for justice and peace, searching for truth, longing for love, open to the absolute and the infinite. Scientific research, economic and social development, the continuous appearance of tension, migration that goes though our planet, the very misery of evil and other enigmas that fill humankind's being constantly interrogate him, thereby setting him on trails laid out by religions and cultures.

Even in our days, humankind, on one hand, seems to be going towards positive goals of different natures: worldwide integration in global systems, but at the same time, sensitivity for pluralism and respect for the different historical and national identities, scientific and technical progress, inter-religious dialogue, communications that are diffused in the areopagus of the whole world through instruments that are more and more effective and immediate. On the other hand, however, in each one of these ways, ancient and invariable obstacles appear in new forms and ways: the idols of economic exploitation, abuse of one's political position, scientific arrogance, religious fanaticism.

The light of the Gospel guides Christians to the discovery, in these manifestations of contemporary civilization, of new "areopagi" wherein to proclaim salvation and discover the signs of longing that lead hearts to the house of the Father.

It does not seem strange that in the whirlpool of this constant change, humankind also experiences fatigue and wishes for a place, which may be a shrine, where he could rest, a space of freedom that makes dialogue possible—with himself, with others and with God. The Christian's pilgrimage accompanies this search of humankind and offers him the security of a goal, the presence of the Lord "for he has visited his people, he has come to their rescue."¹¹⁸

25. Some "universal pilgrimages" assume a particular significance. We are thinking, first of all, of the *vast movement of groups, of masses*, at times of *whole peoples*, who face enormous sacrifices and risks to flee from hunger, wars, environmental catastrophe, and to look for security and well-being for themselves and for their loved ones. No one should remain an inactive spectator before these immense flows that pervade humankind, almost like currents that expand on the face of the earth. No one should feel foreign to the injustice that is often at its roots, to the personal and collective drama, but also to the hopes that bloom for a different future and a prospect of dialogue

and a peaceful multiracial coexistence. The Christian, in particular, must become the good Samaritan on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, ready to help and accompany his brother to an inn of fraternal charity and a life together in solidarity. We may be led to this "spirituality of the way" by knowing, listening to and sharing the experience of that particular "people of the road" who are the nomads, the gypsies, the "children of the wind."

26. Those who set out towards various destinations for reasons of *tourism*, scientific *exploration* or *trade* are also pilgrims of the world. These are complex phenomena which are often sources of harmful consequences because of their enormous dimensions. No one can ignore the fact that they are often a cause of injustice, of the exploitation of persons, of the erosion of cultures or of the devastation of nature. In spite of this, by their nature, they preserve the values of research, progress and the promotion of mutual understanding among peoples, which deserve to be promoted.

It is indispensable to make it possible for those who are part of these sectors to preserve their own spirituality and interior exigencies. It is also necessary for tourism and commercial agents not to be dominated only by economic interests but also to be aware of their human and social functions.

27. Connected with the preceding point, and characteristic of our days, is a particular form of pilgrimage of the human mind, the *informatic* or *virtual* pilgrimage which is diffused along the ways of telecommunications. These routes, with all the risks, deformations and deviations that they involve, can be a means of proclaiming faith and love, positive messages, fruitful and efficacious contacts. It is therefore important to set out along these roads avoiding the dispersion and destruction of true communication against the "background noise" of a Babel-like myriad of information.

28. There are also great "lay pilgrims," those who embark on *cultural* and *sport* itineraries. Great artistic demonstrations, especially musical ones, that witness the gathering of the youth particularly, the flow of visitors in museums that are often transformed into oasis of contemplation, Olympics and other forms of sports assembly are phenomena that cannot be ignored, also because they include spiritual values that must be protected beyond the extrinsic tension, leveling and conditioning of a commercial nature.

29. There are experiences of pilgrimages that are more distinctly Christian. Not only priests, but also whole families and many young people travel or accept to be sent to lands far from their own to collaborate with *missionaries*, both through their professional work, through witness and through the explicit proclamation of the Gospel. It is a form of being pilgrims that is continually increasing, as a gift of the Spirit. They use their vacation or holidays, or spend entire years of their life.

Emblematic images of these spatial, but above all spiritual, movements of our times are the great *ecumenical gatherings* in which prayer for the gift of unity gathers Christians together in a common journey. Equally important are the inter-religious meetings that witness the roving assembly of men and women of all faiths towards a common goal of hope and of love, as what happened in the world prayer of the religions for peace, convoked in Assisi in 1986.

30. A true and real network of itineraries is therefore extending throughout our planet. Some are religious in the most direct sense of the term. Their goals are cities and shrines, monasteries and historical centers. In other cases, the search for spiritual values is manifested in going towards natural sites of rare beauty, islands or deserts, summits or depths of marine abysses. This complex geography of the movement of humankind contains in itself the germ of a radical desire for a transcendent horizon of truth, justice and peace; it gives witness to a restlessness which has for its port the infinity of God, where people may refresh themselves from their anguish.¹¹⁹

The march of humankind, therefore, notwithstanding its tensions and contradictions, participates in the inevitable pilgrimage towards the Kingdom of God, which the Church is committed to announce and fulfill with courage, loyalty and perseverance, being called by his Lord to be salt, leaven, lamp and city on the mountaintop. Only in this way would open paths in which "love and loyalty now meet, righteousness and peace now embrace."¹²⁰

In this itinerary, the Church becomes a pilgrim with all men and women who search with a sincere heart for truth, justice, peace; and even with those who wander elsewhere because—as Paul, citing Isaiah, recalls—God affirmed: "I have been found by those who did not seek me, and have revealed myself to those who did not consult me."¹²¹

31. All peoples and all individuals can therefore direct themselves to this aim of the Kingdom. They may also express their adhesion by means of the explicit and symbolic gesture of a pilgrimage to the various "holy cities" on earth, that is, to the places of the spirit where the message of transcendence and brotherhood resound strongest. Among these cities should also be included those places desecrated by people's sin and later on, almost out of an instinct of reparation, consecrated by pilgrimages. Let us think for instance of Auschwitz, emblematic place of torture of the Hebraic people in Europe, the *Shoà*, or of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, land devastated by the horror of atomic war.

But, as previously stated, two cities acquire the value of a sign, not only for Christians but for everyone: Rome, symbol of the universal mission of the Church; and Jerusalem, Holy Place and venerated by all those who follow the way of the Abrahamic religions, the city from which the Law and the oracle of Yahweh will go out.¹²² This indicates the final destination of the pilgrimage of the whole humankind, that is, "the holy city ... coming down from

God out of heaven.”¹²³ We shall advance towards it in hope singing: “We are a people that is walking/ and walking together we want to reach/ a city that will never end,/ without pain or sadness,/ city of eternity.”¹²⁴

Just as the Church appreciates the poverty of the Buddhist pilgrim monk, the contemplative way of the Tao, the sacred itinerary of Hinduism in Benares, the “pillar” of pilgrimage to the sources of his faith characteristic of the Moslem, and every other itinerary towards the Absolute and towards his brothers, she joins all those who, in a fervent and sincere way, dedicate themselves to the service of the weak, the refugees, the exiles, the oppressed, and undertake with them a “pilgrimage of brotherhood.”

This is the meaning of the jubilee of mercy that appears at the horizon of the third millennium, point of arrival for the creation of a human society that is more just, in which the public debts of developing nations will be condoned and a more equitable distribution of land will be accomplished, in the spirit of the biblical prescription.¹²⁵

VI THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE CHRISTIAN TODAY

32. All Christians are invited to join and take part in the great pilgrimage that Christ, the Church and humankind have accomplished and must continue accomplishing in history. The shrine towards which they must be directed is to become "the Tent of Meeting," as the Bible calls the tabernacle of the alliance.¹²⁶ There, in fact, a fundamental meeting takes place, one that reveals various dimensions and is presented under numerous appearances. It is in this series of aspects that we can delineate a pastoral care of pilgrimages.

Lived as a celebration of one's own faith, for the Christian, a pilgrimage is a manifestation of worship to be accomplished faithfully according to tradition, with an intense religious sentiment and as a fulfillment of his Paschal existence.¹²⁷

The very dynamics of pilgrimages clearly reveal some steps that pilgrims take. They become a paradigm of the whole life of faith; *departure* reveals the decision of pilgrims to go forward up to the destination and achieve the spiritual objectives of their baptismal vocation; *walking* leads them to solidarity with their brothers and sisters and to the necessary preparation for the meeting with the Lord; the *visit to the shrine* invites them to listen to the Word of God and to sacramental celebration; the *return*, in the end, reminds them of their mission in the world, as witnesses of salvation and builders of peace. It is important that these steps in a pilgrimage, lived in groups or individually, are marked by acts of worship, which would reveal their authentic dimension, with the use of the texts recommended in liturgical books for this purpose.

The aspects that each pilgrimage must necessarily include are to be harmoniously designed with just respect for the traditions of each people and adequately harmonized with the conditions of the pilgrims. It is the duty of the Episcopal Conference of every country to lay out the pastoral directives that are most appropriate to the various situations and institute the pastoral structures necessary to realize them. In the diocesan pastoral care of pilgrimages, a distinct role of shrines is recognized. Yet, parishes and other ecclesial groups must also be represented in these pastoral structures since they are directly involved and are points of departure of the largest number of pilgrimages.

Pastoral activity must make it such that through the peculiar characteristics of each pilgrimage, the believer would essentially accomplish a journey of faith.¹²⁸ Through an appropriate catechesis and an attentive accompaniment on the part of the pastoral agents, the presentation of the fundamental aspects of Christian pilgrimages opens new perspectives for its practice in the life of the Church.

33. The aim, towards which the pilgrim's itinerary is directed, is first of all the tent of meeting with God. Isaiah already mentioned these words of God: "My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."¹²⁹ "At the end of the road, in which his ardent heart aspires to see God's countenance,"¹³⁰ in the shrine which fulfills the divine promise stating, "My eyes and my heart shall be always there,"¹³¹ the pilgrim meets the mystery of God and discovers his countenance of love and mercy. In a particular way, this experience is accomplished in the Eucharistic celebration of the Paschal mystery, in which Christ is "at the summit of the revelation of the inscrutable mystery of God";¹³² there one contemplates God, who is always favorable to the grace in Mary, the Mother of God,¹³³ and He is magnified and wonderful in all His saints.¹³⁴

In pilgrimages, people acknowledge that "from the very circumstances of his origin, man is ... invited to converse with God,"¹³⁵ and therefore through this, he is helped to discover that the way he is offered, to "remain in intimate union with God," is Christ, the Word made flesh. The itinerary of the Christian pilgrim must reveal this "essential point by which Christianity differs from all the other religions."¹³⁶ In their totality, pilgrimages must show "that for human beings, the Creator is not an anonymous and remote power; He is the Father,"¹³⁷ and we are all His children, brothers and sisters in Christ the Lord. It is necessary to direct pastoral commitment so that such a fundamental truth of the Christian faith¹³⁸ may not be darkened by traditional customs or cultures, nor by new spiritual movements and ways. Pastoral action, however, will also aim at a constant inculturation of the evangelical message in every culture, of every people.

Finally, the efficacy of shrines will be measured more and more according to their capacity to respond to the growing need of a "silent and attentive contact with God and with themselves"¹³⁹ that people feel under the delirious rhythm of modern life. The route and the destination of pilgrimages lead to the blossoming of the faith and to an intensity of communion with God in prayer, by which ideally, what the prophet Malachi announced is fulfilled: "From farthest east to farthest west my name is honored among the nations and everywhere a sacrifice of incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering too, since my name is honored among the nations, says Yahweh Sabaoth."¹⁴⁰

34. Pilgrimages lead to the *tent of meeting with the Word of God*. The fundamental experience of the pilgrim must be that of listening because "the oracle of Yahweh (will go out) from Jerusalem."¹⁴¹ Thus, the primary commitment of the holy journey is that of evangelization which is often ingrained in the Holy Places themselves.¹⁴² The proclamation, reading and meditation of the Gospel must accompany the steps of the pilgrim and the visit to the shrine itself, so that what the Psalmist affirmed may be accomplished: "Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light on my path."¹⁴³

Because of the circumstances that they inspire, the goals to which they are directed, their nearness to daily joys and necessities, the moments of a pilgrimage are a field that is already favorable to the reception of the Word of God in the hearts;¹⁴⁴ thus the Word becomes the strength of the faith, the food of the soul, pure and perennial source of spiritual life.¹⁴⁵

The whole pastoral activity at the service of pilgrimages must concentrate its efforts in bringing pilgrims close to the Word of God. In the first place, arrangements should be made beforehand for a catechetical process that is suitable to the pilgrim's life of faith, an expression of his cultural reality, through means of communication that are truly accessible and have been proven to be effective. On the other hand, while this catechetical presentation is to take into account the events that are celebrated in the places to be visited and their peculiar nature, it should not forget either the necessary hierarchy in the exposition of the truths of the faith,¹⁴⁶ or a moment within the liturgical itinerary in which the whole Church participates.¹⁴⁷

35. Pilgrimages also lead to the *tent of meeting with the Church*, "assembly of those who are called together by the Word of God to form the people of God. Being nourished by the Body of Christ, they themselves form the Body of Christ."¹⁴⁸ The experience of life in common with the pilgrim brothers and sisters also becomes the occasion to rediscover the people of God walking towards the Jerusalem of peace, in praise and in song, in one faith and in the unity of the love of only one Body, that of Christ. The pilgrim must feel himself a member of the one family of God, surrounded by many brothers and sisters in the faith, under the guide of the "great Shepherd of the sheep"¹⁴⁹ who leads us "by paths of virtue for the sake of his name"¹⁵⁰ under the visible guide of pastors that he has invested with the mission to lead his people.

When they are done by a parish community, by an ecclesial group, by a diocesan assembly or by wider groupings, pilgrimages become a sign of ecclesial life.¹⁵¹ In these cases, it is possible to be better aware of the fact that all participants form part of the Church, according to their own vocation and ministry.

The presence of a spiritual animator has a particular significance. His mission completely falls within the priestly ministry, by which priests "gather God's family together as a brotherhood of living unity, and lead it through Christ and in the Spirit to God the Father."¹⁵² For the exercise of this ministry, they must have a specific catechetical preparation, to faithfully and clearly transmit the Word of God, and an adequate psychological preparation to be able to welcome and understand the diversity among all pilgrims. It will also be greatly useful for them to know history and art, to be in the position to introduce pilgrims into the catechetical wealth that pours out from the works of art that are constant witnesses of ecclesial faith in shrines.¹⁵³

In this ministry, on the other hand, priests are not in any way to forget the specific function that belong to the laity in the living context of the "Church communion."¹⁵⁴ Their active participation in the liturgical¹⁵⁵ and catechetical life, their specific responsibility in the formation of the ecclesial community¹⁵⁶ and their capacity to represent the Church in the most various human needs¹⁵⁷ make them apt to collaborate—after an adequate and specific preparation—in the religious animation of pilgrimages and assist their brothers and sisters during their journey together.

The pastoral care of pilgrimages requires that there be a similar spiritual accompaniment also for those who go on pilgrimage in small groups or individually. In any case, the persons in charge of welcome in the shrine are to arrange beforehand the necessary means for the pilgrim to realize that his journey forms part of the pilgrimage of faith of the whole Church.

The pilgrims' meeting with the Church and their experience of being part of the Body of Christ are to pass through a renewal of their baptismal commitment. Pilgrimages somehow reproduce the journey of faith that one day led them to the baptismal font,¹⁵⁸ and which is now expressed anew through their participation in the sacraments.

36. The shrine, however, is also the tent of meeting in reconciliation. There, in fact, the pilgrim's conscience is moved; there he confesses his sins, there he is forgiven and forgives, there he becomes a new creature through the sacrament of Reconciliation, there he experiences divine mercy and grace. The pilgrim, therefore, repeats the experience of the prodigal son in sin, who experiences the hardness of trials and of penance, and also embraces the sacrifices of the trip, fasting, sacrifice. But he also experiences the joy of the embrace of the Father, rich in mercy, who leads him from death to life: "This son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found."¹⁵⁹ Shrines, therefore, must be places in which the sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated intensely, shared, with a well-conducted liturgy, with available ministers and time, with prayer and songs so that personal conversion may have the divine seal and be lived ecclesially.

Pilgrimages that lead to the shrine must be an itinerary of conversion sustained by the firm hope of the infinite depth and power of the forgiveness offered by God: a way of conversion that "marks out the most profound element of the pilgrimage of every man and woman on earth *in statu viatoris*."¹⁶⁰

37. The goal of pilgrimages must be the *tent of the Eucharistic meeting* with Christ. If the Bible is the book of pilgrims *par excellence*, the Eucharist is the bread that sustains them on their way, as it was for Elijah on his ascent to Horeb.¹⁶¹ Reconciliation with God and with our brothers and sisters terminates in the Eucharistic celebration. It accompanies the various steps of pilgrimages, which must reflect the exodic Paschal episode, but above all the pilgrimage of Christ who celebrated his Pasch in Jerusalem, at the end of his

long journey towards the cross and glory. Therefore, according to general liturgical indications and that of the individual Episcopal Conferences, "at shrines the means of salvation are to be more abundantly made available to the faithful: by sedulous proclamation of the word of God, by suitable encouragement of liturgical life, especially by the celebration of the Eucharist and Penance, and by the fostering of approved forms of popular devotion."¹⁶²

Particular pastoral attention is to be reserved to those pilgrims who, because of their ordinary conditions of life, go to shrines to celebrate special occasions by listening to the Word of God and celebrating the Eucharist. In the joy of that event, may they discover the call to act in their daily life as messengers and builders of the Kingdom of God, of His justice and peace.

38. It is therefore easy to understand that pilgrimages may also be the *tent of meeting with charity*. A charity that is first of all that of God who loved us first by sending His Son into the world. This love is not manifested only in Christ's gift as a victim of expiation for our sins¹⁶³ but also in the miraculous signs that heal and console, as Christ himself did during his earthly pilgrimage, and which are still repeated in the history of shrines.

"Since God has loved us so much, we too should love one another."¹⁶⁴ Charity should also be lived during the journey of the pilgrim, by helping the most needy, by sharing food, time and hopes, aware that it is in this way that new travel companions will be made. A praiseworthy expression of such a charity is the tradition practiced in many places, whereby the offering, presented by the faithful as an expression of their devotion, is considered as goods that can be distributed among the poorest. Pastoral action should animate such gestures with the help of a catechesis that is always respectful of the feelings of the pilgrims and with initiatives that express the intentions of the offering. In this sense, it is best to underline the work that is being done in some shrines in favor of charitable institutions or projects for the assistance of communities in developing countries.

Special charity is to be reserved to the sick who are on pilgrimage, remembering the words of the Lord: "In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brother of mind, you did it to me."¹⁶⁵ Assistance to sick pilgrims is the most significant expression of the love that must nourish the heart of the Christian traveling towards the shrine. Sick pilgrims, above all, must be received with the warmest hospitality. It will therefore be necessary that the structures of welcome, the services offered, communications and transport should be prepared, equipped and managed with dignity, care and love.

On their part, the sick should let the love of Christ shine in them, such that they live their illness as an itinerary of grace and of gift of self. Their pilgrimage to places in which the grace of God is manifested through particular "signs" will help them become evangelizers among their companions in suffering. Thus, from being "objects of compassion," they become subjects of

commitment and of action, true "pilgrims of the Lord" along all the roads of the world.

39. Pilgrimages, however, also lead to the *tent of meeting with humankind*. All the religions of the world, as previously mentioned, have their own holy itineraries and their holy cities. In every place of the earth, God himself becomes a meeting with the pilgrim and proclaims a universal convocation to participate fully in the joy of Abraham.¹⁶⁶ In particular, the three great monotheistic religions are called to find again "the tent of meeting" in the faith so that they may witness and build messianic justice and peace before all peoples, to redeem history.

Worthy of special attention on the part of pastoral care is the fact that numerous Christian shrines are goals of pilgrimages of believers of other religions, due to secular tradition and to recent immigration as well. This solicits the pastoral action of the Church to respond with initiatives of hospitality, dialogue, assistance and genuine fraternity.¹⁶⁷ The hospitality reserved to pilgrims will surely help them discover the profound meaning of pilgrimages. For them, the shrine must be a place of that respect that we must manifest first of all through the purity of our faith in Christ, the one savior of the human being.¹⁶⁸

It should also be observed that, aside from holding big ecumenical gatherings and inter-religious meetings, the Christian must be near to all those who seek God with a sincere heart by walking through the ways of the spirit, even by "feeling their way towards him" even if God "is not far from any of us."¹⁶⁹ Their very pilgrimage, often done in foreign lands, leads to the knowledge of different practices, customs and cultures. It must therefore be transformed into an occasion of communion in solidarity with the values of other peoples, brothers and sisters in the humanity that everyone shares and in the common origin of the one Creator of all.

Pilgrimages are also moments of living together with people of different ages and formation. It is necessary to travel together to be able to proceed together in social and ecclesial life. The young go forward with their marches and the World Youth Days, the elderly and the sick, at times together with the young, towards more traditional shrines. In their multiple diversity, pilgrims fulfill together what the Psalmist wished: "All kings on earth and nations, princes, all rulers in the world, young men and girls, old people and children too! Let them all praise the name of Yahweh, for his name and no other is sublime, transcending earth and heaven in majesty."¹⁷⁰

40. Pilgrimages also have as their goal the *tent of personal meeting* with God and with oneself. Lost in the multiplicity of daily anxieties and realities, people need to discover themselves through reflection, meditation, prayer, an examination of conscience, silence. In the holy tent of the shrine, they must ask themselves how much "will remain of the night" of his soul, as Isaiah

expresses in his song of the watchman: "Morning is coming, then night again. If you want to, why not ask, turn round, come back?"¹⁷¹ The great questions on the meaning of existence, on life, on death, on the ultimate destiny of the human person must resound in the heart of the pilgrim such that the journey would not only be a movement of the body but also an itinerary of the soul. In interior silence, God will reveal himself exactly as a "sound of a gentle breeze"¹⁷² that transforms the heart and existence. Only in this way will pilgrims not fall back into distraction and superficiality on their return home, but will preserve a spark of that light which they received in their soul and will feel the need to repeat this experience of personal fullness in the future, "inspired ... with courage to make the Ascents."¹⁷³

The pilgrim thus travels through the itinerary accompanied by the liturgical prayer of the Church and the simplest devotional exercises, by personal prayer and moments of silence, by the contemplation that pours forth from the heart of the poorest, who lift their "eyes ... on their master's hand."¹⁷⁴

41. While persons are on pilgrimage, they also have the chance to enter the *tent of cosmic meeting* with God. Shrines are often located in places with an extraordinary panorama; they manifest greatly fascinating artistic forms; they concentrate on themselves ancient historical memories; they are expressions of popular and refined culture. It is therefore necessary for pilgrimages not to exclude this dimension of the spirit. Above all, it is to be understood that a greater inclination to appreciate nature reveals a precious spiritual dimension of the modern person. This contemplation could become the theme of moments of reflection and prayer, so that the pilgrim may praise the Lord for the heavens that declare his glory,¹⁷⁵ and may feel called to be a minister of the world in holiness and justice.¹⁷⁶

It should also be noted that, in certain ways, every pilgrimage reveals an aspect of religious tourism that must be planned not only for a cultural enrichment of the person, but also towards a fullness of the spirit. Contemplation of beauty is a source of spirituality. Therefore, "in shrines or in places adjacent to them, votive offerings of popular art and devotion are to be displayed and carefully safeguarded."¹⁷⁷ Pilgrims must be shown these treasures, through guides or other materials, so that through artistic beauty and the spontaneity of age-old witnesses of faith, they may sing to God their joy and hope through art,¹⁷⁸ they may find serenity again in the contemplation of marvelous things and "through the grandeur and beauty of the creatures ..., by analogy, contemplate their author."¹⁷⁹

Pastoral action must equally take into account all those who walk through the ways of pilgrimages for other reasons, like culture or free time. The way the different places and monuments are presented show their explicit relation with the itinerary of the pilgrim, with the spiritual goal to which they lead and with the experience of faith that originated from them and they still animate. This information is to be offered to the organizers of

these trips, such that they may be accomplished in utmost respect and may truly contribute to the cultural enrichment and spiritual progress of travelers.

42. Finally, pilgrimages are very often the way to enter the *tent of meeting with Mary*, the Mother of the Lord. Mary, in which the pilgrimage of the Word towards humankind converges with humankind's pilgrimage of faith,¹⁸⁰ is "the one who advanced on the pilgrimage of faith,"¹⁸¹ thus becoming "star of evangelization"¹⁸² for the journey of the whole Church. The great Marian shrines (like Lourdes, Fatima or Loreto; Czestochowa, Altötting or Marizell; Guadalupe, Aparecida or Luján), and the small shrines, which popular devotion constructed in countless numbers in thousands and thousands of localities, can be privileged places for a meeting with her Son whom she gives us. Her womb was the first shrine, the tent of meeting between divinity and humanity on which the Holy Spirit descended and which "the power of the Most High [covered] with its shadow."¹⁸³

Christians travel with Mary along the roads of love and join Elizabeth who typifies the sisters and the brothers in the world with whom a bond of faith and praise is to be established.¹⁸⁴ The *Magnificat* then becomes the song *par excellence*, not only of the *peregrinatio Mariae* but also of our pilgrimage in hope.¹⁸⁵ Christians travel with Mary along the roads of the world to ascend right up to Calvary and be beside her like the beloved disciple, so that Christ may hand her over to them as their Mother.¹⁸⁶ Christians travel with Mary along the roads of faith so as to reach the Cenacle in the end and there, together with her, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit from her Risen Son.¹⁸⁷

Liturgy and Christian piety offer to pilgrims numerous examples of the way by which they can turn to Mary as a pilgrimage companion. They are to refer to these examples, first of all considering that the acts of piety regarding the Virgin Mary must clearly express the trinitarian and Christological dimension, intrinsically and essentially.¹⁸⁸ By cultivating a genuine Marian devotion,¹⁸⁹ pilgrims enrich their profound devotion to the Mother of God with new forms and manifestations of their innermost sentiments.

CONCLUSION

43. Pilgrimages symbolize the experience of the *homo viator* who sets out, as soon as he leaves the maternal womb, on his journey through the time and space of his existence. This is the fundamental experience of Israel which is marching towards the Promised Land of salvation and of full freedom; the experience of Christ who rose to heaven from the land of Jerusalem, thus opening the way towards the Father; the experience of the Church which moves on through history towards the heavenly Jerusalem; the experience of the whole humankind which tends towards hope and fullness. Every pilgrim should confess: "By the grace of God, I am a human person and a Christian; by my actions, a great sinner; by my condition as a pilgrim without a roof, of the lowliest species that goes wandering from place to place. My possessions are a sack on my shoulders with a bit of dry bread and a Holy Bible that I carry under my shirt. No other thing do I have."¹⁹⁰

The Word of God and the Eucharist accompany us in this pilgrimage towards the heavenly Jerusalem, of which shrines are a visible and living sign. When we will reach it, the gates of the Kingdom will open, we will abandon the traveling attire and the staff of the pilgrim and we shall enter our house definitively "to stay with the Lord for ever."¹⁹¹ There He will be in our midst as "the one who serves"¹⁹² and He will share our meal, side by side with us.¹⁹³

The Holy Father, John Paul II, on April 11, 1998, approved the publication of the present document.

Vatican City, April 25, 1998

✠ Giovanni Cardinal Cheli
President

✠ Archbishop Francesco Gioia
Secretary

NOTES

- 1 1 *Ch* 29:15.
- 2 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council. Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 49.
- 3 Cf. National Office of the Italian Episcopal Conference for the Pastoral Care of Leisure, Tourism and Sports, *Pastorale del Pellegrinaggio*, 1996, p. 44.
- 4 Cf. *Gn* 3:23-24.
- 5 Cf. *Gn* 4:15.
- 6 Cf. *Lk* 15:11-32.
- 7 *Pr* 2:13; 4:19.
- 8 Cf. *Pr* 2:15; 10:9; 21:8.
- 9 Cf. *Pr* 2:19; 5:6; 6:23; 15:24.
- 10 Cf. *Pr* 8:20; 12:28; *Ba* 3:13; *Is* 59:8.
- 11 Cf. *Ps* 119:30; *Tb* 1:3.
- 12 Cf. *Ps* 101:2.
- 13 Cf. *Gn* 12:1-4.
- 14 *Heb* 11:8-10,13.
- 15 *Gn* 23: 4.
- 16 Cf. *Gn* 21:9-21; 26:12-18.
- 17 Cf. *Gn* 28:2.
- 18 Cf. *Gn* 47, 50.
- 19 Cf. 1 *Co* 10:1-13.
- 20 Cf. *Is* 43:16-21.
- 21 Cf. *Ws* 11-19.
- 22 Cf. *Ws* 19.
- 23 *Dt* 2:7.
- 24 *Jbs* 24:17.
- 25 *Jt* 2:2.
- 26 *Ex* 22:20.
- 27 *Dt* 10:19; cf. 24:17.
- 28 *Ps* 39:12; cf. 119:19.
- 29 Cf. *Lv* 25:23.
- 30 Cf. *Ex* 34:24.
- 31 Cf. *Ps* 120-134.
- 32 Cf. *Ps* 128:1.
- 33 Cf. *Dt* 32:18; *Ps* 18:2; 46:2-8.
- 34 Cf. *Ps* 122:4.
- 35 Cf. *Ps* 15:1,5.
- 36 Cf. *Ps* 43:3-4.
- 37 *Ps* 84:4-5.
- 38 *Jr* 31:6; cf. *Is* 2:5.
- 39 Cf. *Is* 2:2-4; 56:6-8; 66:18-23; *Mi* 4:1-4; *Zc* 8:20-23.
- 40 Cf. *Ezk* 36:26-27.
- 41 Cf. *Is* 1:17.
- 42 Cf. *Hos* 2:16-18.
- 43 Cf. *Is* 60:3-6.
- 44 Cf. *Is* 25:6.
- 45 Cf. *Is* 55:1-2.
- 46 Cf. *Ezk* 34:11-16.
- 47 *Jn* 14:6.
- 48 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Encycl. Let. *Redemptor Hominis*, 18.
- 49 *Jn* 1:2, 14.

- 50 Pope John Paul II, Apost. Let. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 6.
 51 Cf. *Lk* 2:22-24.
 52 Cf. *Lk* 2:49.
 53 Cf. *Lk* 9:51; 24:51.
 54 *Lk* 9:31.
 55 *Mt* 16:24; cf. *Mt* 10:38; *Lk* 9:23.
 56 Cf. *Mk* 8:27,34; 9:33-34; 10:17, 21, 28, 32-33, 46, 52.
 57 Cf. *Ac* 1:11.
 58 Cf. *Jn* 14:2-3.
 59 *Jn* 16:28; 17:24.
 60 *Ac* 2:9-11.
 61 Cf. *Lk* 24:13-35.
 62 Cf. *Mt* 2:1-12.
 63 *Mt* 8:11.
 64 Cf. *Ac* 2:28; 9:2; 16:17; 18:25-26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 32.
 65 Cf. *Mt* 28:19-20.
 66 *Ga* 5:16.
 67 Cf. *Rv* 22:17, 20.
 68 Cf. *Ep* 2:19; 1 *Pt* 2:11
 69 *Ep* 2:19
 70 *Heb* 13:13-14.
 71 *Rv* 21:4.
 72 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 9.
 73 Cf. *Ac* 8:4.
 74 Cf. *Ac* 2:7-11.
 75 Pope John Paul II, Apost. Let. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 25.
 76 Cf. St. Augustine, *De Vera Religione* 39, 72: CCL 32, 234; PL 34, 154.
 77 St. Augustine, *De Trinitate* 15, 2, 2: CCL 50, 461; PL 42, 1058.
 78 Origen, *In Leviticum* XIII, 5: *SCh* 287, 220; PG 12, 551.
 79 Cf. St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Lettera* 2, 18: *SCh* 363, 122; PG 46, 1013.
 80 Cf. St. Jerome, *Lettera* 58, 2-3: CSEL 54, 529-532; PL 22, 580-581.
 81 Cf. *Ps* 36:9.
 82 *Mt* 5:48.
 83 *Ga* 2:20.
 84 *Ph* 1:21.
 85 Pope John Paul II, *Discourse* during a visit to Vienna (September 10, 1983): AAS 76 (1984), p. 140.
 86 St. Bernard, *Letter to the Bishop of Lincoln*, Let. 64, 2: PL 182, 169ff.
 87 "Urbs Ierusalem beata,/ dicta pacis vision,/ quae construitur in coelis,/ vivis ex lapidibus." Rom. Brev., *Comm. De Dedic. Eccl.*, Himnus ad Vesp.
 88 M. Luther, *To the Christian Aristocracy of the German Nation* (1520): WA 6, 437.
 89 Pope John Paul II, Apost. Let. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 18.
 90 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, *Message to Humanity* (October 20, 1962).
 91 Cf. Pope John XXIII, *Opening Speech* to the Second Vatican Council (October 11, 1962); Pope Paul VI, *Opening Speech* at the second session of the Second Vatican Council (September 29, 1963): AAS 55 (1963), p. 842.
 92 Pope Paul VI, *Discourse* at the conclusion of the third session of the Second Vatican Council (November 21, 1964): AAS 56 (1964), p. 1013.
 93 Pope Paul VI, *Speech* at the Assembly of the United Nations (October 4, 1965): AAS 57 (1965), p. 878
 94 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, *Closing Messages of the Council* (August 12, 1965).
 95 Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Discourse* at the conclusion of the second session of the Second Vatican Council (April 12, 1963): AAS 56 (1964), p. 39.

- 96 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 2.
 97 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 7-9.
 98 Cf. *ibid.*, 3; 13.
 99 Cf. *ibid.*, 3.
 100 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Ad Gentes*, 5.
 101 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 7; 10.
 102 Cf. *Ex* 12:1-14.
 103 Cf. *Jos* 5:10-12.
 104 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decr. *Ad Gentes*, 2; Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 17.
 105 *Mt* 28:19.
 106 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, 7.
 107 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Past. Const. *Gaudium et Spes*, 38.
 108 Cf. *ibid.*, 1-7.
 109 Cf. *ibid.*, 3; 11.
 110 Cf. *ibid.*, 43.
 111 Cf. *ibid.*, 44.
 112 Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Nobis in Animum* of Pope Paul VI, March 25, 1974, on the increased needs of the Church in the Holy Land; Apostolic Letter *Apostolorum Limina* of Pope Paul VI, May 25, 1974, for the proclamation of the Holy Year 1975; Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino* of Pope Paul VI, September 5, 1975, on Christian joy of the Holy Year; Apostolic Letter *Aperite portas Redemptori* of Pope John Paul II, June 1, 1983, for the proclamation of the Jubilee of 1983; Apostolic Letter *Redemptionis Anno* of Pope John Paul II, April 20, 1984, on Jerusalem, holy patrimony of all believers, at the conclusion of the Jubilee of 1983; Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* of Pope John Paul II, November 10, 1994.
 113 Pope John Paul II, *General Audience*, April 9, 1997, referring to the pastoral trip in Sarajevo.
 114 Cf. *Lv* 25.
 115 *Ps* 104:13.
 116 *Ac* 2:44-45.
 117 *Dt* 15:4-7.
 118 *Lk* 1:68.
 119 Cf. St. Augustine, *Confessions* I, 1: CCL 27, 1; PL 32, 661; *XIII*, 38, 53: CCL 27, 272ff.; PL 32, 868.
 120 *Ps* 85:11.
 121 *Rm* 10:20; cf. *Is* 65:1.
 122 Cf. *Is* 2:3.
 123 *Rv* 21:2.
 124 "Somos un pueblo que camina/ y juntos caminando queremos alcanzar/ una ciudad que no se acaba/ sin pena ni tristeza/ ciudad de eternidad" (Latin American song).
 125 Cf. *Lv* 25.
 126 Cf. *Ex* 27:21; 29:4, 10-11, 30, 32, 42, 44.
 127 Cf. Congregation for Divine Worship, "Orientations and Suggestions for the Celebration of the Marian Year" (April 3, 1987), *Notitiae* 23 (1987), pp. 342-396.
 128 Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Discourse* to a group of North American Bishops in *visita ad limina* (September 21, 1993): AAS 86 (1994), p. 495.
 129 *Is* 56:7.
 130 Pope John Paul II, *Discourse* to the participants in the First World Congress of the Pastoral Care of Shrines and Pilgrimages (February 28, 1992): *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XV, 1 (1992), p. 490.
 131 1 *K* 9:3.
 132 Pope John Paul II, Enc. Let. *Dives in Misericordia*, 8.
 133 Cf. *ibid.*, 9.
 134 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 50.

- 135 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Past. Const. *Gaudium et Spes*, 19.
- 136 Pope John Paul II, Apost. Let. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 6.
- 137 Pope Paul VI, Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 26.
- 138 Cf. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 240.
- 139 Pope John Paul II, Letter for the VII Centennial of Loreto (August 15, 1993): *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, XVI, 2 (1993), p. 533.
- 140 *Ml* 1:11.
- 141 *Is* 2:3.
- 142 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Apost. Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, 47.
- 143 *Ps* 119:105.
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- 145 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, 21.
- 146 Cf. Pope Paul VI, Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 25.
- 147 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 102; *Collectio Missarum de beata Maria Virgine*, Introduction, 6.
- 148 The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 777.
- 149 *Heb* 13:20.
- 150 *Ps* 23:3.
- 151 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Discourse to the French bishops on the occasion of the *ad limina* visit (April 4, 1992): *AAS* 85 (1993), p. 368.
- 152 Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 6.
- 153 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Apost. Exhortation *Pastores dabo Vobis* (April 4, 1992), 71-72: *AAS* 84 (1992), pp. 782-787.
- 154 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Apost. Exhortation *Christifidelis Laici*, 18.
- 155 Cf. *ibid.*, 23.
- 156 Cf. *ibid.*, 34.
- 157 Cf. *ibid.*, 7.
- 158 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Homily in the Basilica of Aparecida, Brazil (July 4, 1980): *Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II*, III, 2 (1980), p. 99.
- 159 *Lk* 15:24.
- 160 Pope John Paul II, Encycl. Let. *Dives in Misericordia*, 13.
- 161 Cf. 1 *K* 19:4-8.
- 162 *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1234 § 1.
- 163 Cf. 1 *Jn* 4:10.
- 164 1 *Jn* 4:11.
- 165 *Mt* 25:40.
- 166 Cf. Pope Paul VI, Apost. Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino*, c.V.
- 167 Cf. Pope John Paul II, Encyc. Let. *Redemptoris Missio*, 37.
- 168 Cf. 1 *Tm* 2:5.
- 169 *Ac* 17:27.
- 170 *Ps* 148:11-13.
- 171 *Is* 21:12.
- 172 1 *K* 19:12.
- 173 *Ps* 84:6.
- 174 Cf. *Ps* 123:2.
- 175 Cf. *Ps* 19:2.
- 176 Cf. *Ws* 9:3.
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- 178 Cf. *Ps* 47:7.
- 179 *Ws* 13:5; cf. *Rm* 1:19-20.
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- 181 Pope John Paul II, Encycl. Let. *Redemptoris Mater*, 25.

- 182 Pope Paul VI, Apost. Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 82.
183 *Lk* 1:35.
184 Cf. *Lk* 1:39-56.
185 Pope John Paul II, Encycl. Let. *Redemptoris Mater*, 37.
186 Cf. *Jn* 19:26-27.
187 Cf. *Ac* 1:14; 2:1-4.
188 Cf. Pope Paul VI, Apost. Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*, 25.
189 Cf. Second Vat. Ecum. Council, Dogm. Const. *Lumen Gentium*, 67.
190 Anonymous Russian, *A Pilgrim's Way*, I.
191 1 *Th* 4:17.
192 *Lk* 22:27.
193 Cf. *Rv* 3:20.

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